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A NEW ORTHODOXY
OF
JESUS AND PERSONALITY

By

ARTHUR TEMPLE CADOUX

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LONDON

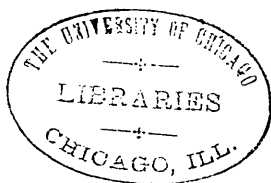
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PREFACE

THE title of this book needs a word of explanation.

I at first intended to call it *The Faith of a Heretic*, because, though no man thinks himself a heretic in the eyes of heaven, I was well aware that much of what is here written will be condemned by the traditionally orthodox, and because I wished those who were not satisfied with traditional orthodoxy to know that it was possible to have a faith as positive as the fundamentalist's, but with a mind quite free towards all that science or Biblical criticism has to say—a faith able to find freedom and momentum in the results of modern research. But on consideration, being convinced that traditional orthodoxy is not to-day possible to simple and honest minds and that Christianity must make room for certain considerations of modern thought and knowledge, and can do so with gain to its worship and work, it seemed to me more honest to take the present title, despite its presumption, which, after all, is only apparent, for no man thinks the faith by which he lives less than orthodox, however it may differ from traditional orthodoxy. And in the experimental nature of the book I must seek excuse for an otherwise too frequent use of the pronoun "I".

I am greatly indebted to my friends, the Rev. W. D. Ffrench, of Leeds, and the Rev. T. Rook, M.A., of Buxton, for their many and valuable suggestions.

A. T. CADOUX.

Glasgow, 1933.

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CHAPTER I

FAITH IN GOD

I BELIEVED in God only tentatively and by proxy until I saw three things : (1) that faith in God and his goodness was but the open statement of a faith implied in all our personal activity, (2) that the achieved goodness of Jesus empowers this faith to stand in the open as our conscious and permanent possession, and (3) that it not only does this, but persuades us of such goodness in God that the faith that was implied in our highest occasions becomes the effective truth of life.

This book attempts to explain these assertions and what they imply.

(1)

All our characteristically human activities bear a faith in their hearts, if not on their lips. A man gives his life in loyalty to truth or justice or in service to his fellows, and we revere the act as supremely right. We are sure he has done the best that could be done. It was undoubtedly the worst thing possible for him as a physical organism, so that our sureness that it was the right thing to do implies that he is not merely a physical organism—that taking him as a whole the dominantly important part of him is that which values truth and right. And to judge thus is to assert a faith that there is something in the very constitution of the

universe¹ by virtue of which truth and right are more important than physical safety. The sureness that it would be better for me to die rather than to betray truth implies the faith that, though I am a physical being, I am more truly and importantly a spiritual being, and that my universe, though in one aspect physical, is more truly and importantly spiritual. Nor does it weaken this conclusion to say that if I preserved my life at the cost of betraying truth I should be too miserable to enjoy my gain; for in that case my misery would be caused by my being sure that what I had betrayed was more important than my life.

Something similar is to be detected in other characteristically human activities. Our thought and action take as assured much that is neither observed fact nor logical deduction from observed fact.

It is now generally recognized that all scientific investigation and activity proceed upon the faith that the universe is an orderly whole, and that we cannot think seriously without assuming that our experience is intelligible, that is, without the tacit faith that the universe is an intelligible whole—an assumption that cannot be proved until we know everything.

As soon, too, as our intellect becomes conscious of itself, it declares that it speaks for all intelligence everywhere. I am sure that if my mind works truly,

¹ The word "universe" is in this book used in two senses, there being no other term available, (1) from the point of view at which the affirmations of religious faith are not yet made, it is used for the ordered whole of all that is, leaving in abeyance the question as to whether the universe finds its completeness and reality in God or not, and (2) from the point of view of religious faith, it is used for the whole creative outgoing of God. It is never used for a system of nature considered as complete in itself apart from God.

its conclusions will agree with all other truly working minds. Differences of thought are expected, but the mind puts them down to infirmities or differences of data or approach. There is thus in all thinking a faith that the universe is so constituted that it brings forth thinkers who acknowledge the kinship of their thought as grounded in the very nature of things, i.e. in the very universe that has brought them forth.

And all our serious thinking involves the faith (even when we are most sceptical) that serious thinking brings us nearer to the truth of things and that truth is good for man even when he finds it unpleasant. And what is this but an implied faith in man's spiritual kinship with the universe ?

Philosophers tell us that we cannot prove the existence of a world external to ourselves. They remind us that we have direct experience of our sensations but not of the world outside us, and that we make our sensations intelligible by taking it for granted that they tell us of an external world, of the existence of which we have no proof and which we know only through the working of our mind upon our sensations, which are themselves changes within our own mind. Yet in the serious concerns of life no one for a moment doubts the existence of an external world. And philosophers agree that this is not a conclusion from observed fact nor a theory to account for the order of our sensations : it comes too early, being already implied in all we call observation or theorization ; and it is hard to see where, in all sensation or elaboration of sensation, the material for the idea of an external world could be found, if it did not come with the very activity of the mind itself.

We cannot be mentally active and conscious of our activity without distinguishing between what is our activity and what is not, and therefore recognizing over against the self what is not the self, i.e. a world external to us. Faith in an external world is thus bound up with the consciousness of our mental activity.

We thus see that affirmations of faith are involved in all our thinking, but just because we cannot really doubt the things so affirmed, and are accustomed to connect the word "faith" with what can be doubted, we are very slow to recognize that here nevertheless it is nothing but faith that gives us our sureness.

A little less clearly but no less certainly, an element of faith is involved in the wonder with which we contemplate the world and its life. We reckon that a man who lacks this misses much of our human heritage and will grow petty and stale. But this wonder implies an affirmation about the unknown: we own a mystery, but greet it as neither unimportant, nor unworthy, nor hostile. We are sure that to take the unknown as merely unknown is to debase ourselves and miss part of our natural inheritance. What is this, if it is not a dim discernment of kinship with the unknown? But the kinship is not on the physical level, where nature is often wild, estranged, and fierce. So that in the wonder with which a healthy mind regards nature there is an element of worship and faith, vague but undeniable. A similar element is to be found in the "wise passiveness" which Wordsworth commends, for it is an attitude of confidence in nature as a whole, a faith

“ That Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her ” ;

though Wordsworth was well enough aware of nature's dangerous side.

Love of beauty has by different devotees been proclaimed as involving two different and apparently conflicting faiths. To some beauty is the interpreter of life's reality : “ Beauty is truth, truth beauty.” They are sure that the way in which all being, and especially all living being, brings forth beauty, and the way in which life in themselves urges them to enjoy and increase the world's beauty, are most significant of the reality that moves through all being and all life. Others to whom art is an escape from reality would probably deny that their attitude implied anything but a negative faith ; yet the assumption that over against life's reality they can create something better, something of greater value, is itself no small faith. It affirms that the universe has endowed them with the power to supply its own deficiencies and with a life that finds its satisfaction in so doing.

But we return to the aspect of personal activity concerned with the term “ ought ”, for it is not only the most inclusive aspect, since there is little, if anything, that we think or feel, enjoy or do, that ought not either to be as it is or otherwise, but it is also the aspect which has the most readily recognized, most important, and most undeniable implications of faith.

If we trace the factors that control our conduct back to our savage and pre-human ancestors, we find less and less control by conscious intelligence and more

and more dominance of the instincts, so that the main interest, for our purpose, in human conduct is the interplay between our instincts and our conscious intelligence. Their relation is twofold. With man, as to a less extent with beasts, intelligence serves the instincts, and is such an efficient servant that man with his big brain outmatched all competitors. The peculiarly human use of intelligence is that when instincts come into conflict between themselves, it determines the conflict. And if we ask what it is that turns the instincts' maid of all work into their judge, we shall find that its activity in so doing always involves an act of faith. Savage tribesmen devise a trap for a lion : that is intelligence in the service of instinct ; but it is different when a savage is divided in mind between the instinct to seek his own safety and the instinct to help his fellow under the lion's paw. In the second case we see at once the greatness of the issue involved. Instinct itself cannot decide ; and intelligence, without something more than the logical handling of observed data, can do nothing but act as counsel for both sides, making the conflict more extensive and entangled, or allow itself to be suborned into giving one side a specious and unwholesome preference. The case under consideration makes it clear that if intelligence is really to decide between conflicting motives, the decision must be made by reference to values that are not the natural goal of any instinct, and must involve a pronouncement on the meaning and purpose of life. Instincts move the organism without needing to explain why it should be moved, but when instincts conflict, intelligence can decide between them only by asking why the one should

be allowed rather than the other. And the answer to this question, "Why?" cannot be found in observed fact, for every "Why?" must justify itself by reference to a larger one, till we have to answer the question, "What are you living for?" and no answer can be given to this that does not involve a belief about life and the universe.

If we say that when instincts are in conflict, the intelligence decides by asking where the greatest pleasure lies, we shall find that we cannot measure pleasures without referring to higher and lower pleasures, and that the distinction of high from low pleasures and the preference of the one to the other involve a faith in life's meaning and purpose.

Moral deliberation is of two sorts—as to what is the right thing to do, and as to whether we should do it or not. Both involve faith, but differently. If the decision between conflicting instincts was determined by the strongest of them, they could decide amongst themselves—as they are said to do in the unconscious—without the intervention of intelligence. Intelligence, as we have seen, can judge between warring instincts only by the introduction of the non-instinctive motive of consciously appraised values, the affirmation of which, as we have also seen, involves a faith. When instincts war, the question, "To be, or not to be," resolves itself into "Whether 'tis nobler?" and so appeals to a world above the instinctive and physical. The appearance of the morally deliberative human will is thus the "emergence" of a new kind of power in the world, characterized by the exercise of initiative and faith.

On the other hand, deliberation as to whether to do

right or not is the uncertainty of the intelligence as to whether it shall give genuine decision and hold it, or allow itself to be bribed or bullied by instinctive pressure into renouncing criticism and giving itself to the elaboration of excuses. In wrong-doing the intelligence consents to its own frustration—

“ To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself ”

—*Macbeth*, II, ii.

The choice between doing right or wrong is the choice between exercising or refraining from exercising the activity of intelligent determination, and this involves the faith that we possess this power, a faith important enough to call for further consideration.

All ethical activity implies the faith that we are in some real and important way the initiators of our deeds and that we have real alternatives of choice before us. I am sure that in blaming myself for certain acts I am neither ridiculous nor dishonest, and that to cast the blame upon heredity or circumstance would be dishonourable and false. Certain theologies and philosophies and recently a psychology (to be dealt with in the next chapter) tell us that all we do and think and say is predetermined and inevitable, but this formidable mass of objection only makes it all the more significant that in some of our activity and in all serious contemplation of it, we never doubt that we are free to choose. And probably much of the cry against this claim comes from the apprehension of the great affirmations involved in it. For it asserts that my personality is something more than the result of foregoing biological or physical factors, is a power of

intelligent initiative, a spiritual being ; it therefore implies a faith that the universe is of the sort in which such a spiritual being can find the ground of its reality. This assertion of moral freedom is the affirmation of a spiritual world in which we are not things but creative co-partners, and which dominates or at least hopefully invades the physical world. Moral choice is the emergence of an apparently new factor in the world, a factor which, by its very emergence, proclaims a deeper reality than any hitherto to be apprehended in the world.

It begins to become clear that the core of personality is an activity which is at the same time an act of faith. In the whole stream of my experience I distinguish myself as over against the universe of things and other selves because I distinguish between what happens to me and what I do. It may be said, perhaps, that when a man treads on my toe, the conviction that it is my toe and not his that suffers comes from what I feel not from what I do, and therefore it is in feeling and not in activity that we must look for the roots of the consciousness of a self over against an external world. But when we ask why, of all the sensations which an object occasions in us, we refer the colour, smoothness, hardness, etc., to the object, but the pain to ourselves, we shall find the answer in the age-long and inseparable connection between the sensation of pain and the action to get away from the cause of it. My sensations of colour, brightness, hardness, I refer to the pin : I recognize the pain of the puncture as my own because it makes me jump. My reference to my own toe of the pain occasioned by the other man's foot is bound up

with what I do or have to keep myself from doing. It is, thus, in action rather than in feeling that the consciousness of a self over against the world has its root. On a higher plain the distinction is more obvious. Emotionally I may be far more concerned with the fortunes of another than of myself: it is what in this connection I can or cannot do that makes sharp the distinction between myself and the other. But obviously activity can be truly conscious of itself only as self-activity or initiative. Activity that is nothing but the result of past activities cannot be validly conscious of itself as activity: it would be merely suffered change. And we distinguish quite clearly in our experience between being pushed and moving of ourselves, between suffered change and conscious activity, it being in conscious activity that we find the distinction of self from all that is not ourself. This distinction would disappear if, in what seem to us to be the moments of active initiative, we could get ourselves wholly to believe that we had no real initiative or power of choice; but this we cannot do, whatever may be our philosophy in the matter. Consciousness of initiative is thus quite a different thing from our experience of the things that happen to us and from any deduction from that experience. The power of initiative, which is the focus round which we organize the experience of self, is a matter that we cannot prove and cannot really doubt: it is the primal act of faith by which we possess ourselves.

And there is more to be said about the faith implied in our moral activity. In doing right there are always certain elements in the concrete act about which I am doubtful, but I am always absolutely sure that it is best

for me that I think and act justly, kindly, and truthfully. The way in which it will be best for me is quite undefined except that there is no confidence that it will be in terms of physical comfort, safety, or delight, and this goes to prove that we are here dealing neither with an "infantile" wish, like a man's belief in his luck, nor with deduction from observed facts. Here then is a faith that my true good is not in the physical, and that the spirit of truth, justice, and kindness is our most inclusive and reliable interpretation of reality so far as it concerns the self.

Again, in many respects, with regard to what happens to me and what I do, my benefit by no means coincides with the benefit of others. If food is scarce, enough for me may mean too little for others: monetarily my gain may be another's loss. Yet I am absolutely sure that for me to act kindly, justly, and truly is best both for me and for all whom the act concerns. This cannot be proved: often appearances are against it; yet we act in the unshakable confidence that it is so. I am absolutely sure that here the difference between my good and others' good is transcended, that to act in the interests of my greatest good is at the same time to aid the greatest good of my fellows, even when they repay my goodwill by hatred. Here then is a faith that the union between man and man is not merely physical or social. What more it implies will appear better as we consider one of the most striking features of the moral imperative—its absoluteness.

The moral obligation comes with a command that takes precedence of all other considerations. To think truly, to live loyally, to act justly and kindly, must be

preferred to delight, comfort, glory, and life itself. This implies a belief, not only about myself, but about the universe from which I draw my being. If, before man appeared on this planet, there was, in all the universe, no such thing as goodwill or truth, then, as a self-conscious being, I am a product of the physical and my interests as a self-conscious being have no right to claim absolute precedence over my interests as a physical organism. To recognize an absolute moral obligation is an act of faith that in the ultimate reality of the universe goodwill dominates. This is but another side of the assurance that I shall never regret acting justly and kindly—that there is nowhere in the universe and never will be anything that can disprove the affirmation that for me to act so is best for me and for all whom my act touches. When we speak of acting “in scorn of consequence”, we mean “in faith of consequence”—we mean in fact nothing less than the risking of all in the absolute assurance that the universe is good at heart if not in appearance. I cannot believe the right to be the law of my being without believing that the right has its ground where my being has its ground—in the universe. But if the universe as a whole is mindless and non-moral, then there can be no absolute moral obligation upon me. Here is implied, not merely a spiritual power dominating the universe, but a fellowship between my spirit and the spirit of the universe. For the right is not something that is done through me. It is a concurrence of my own personal initiative with the command of my universe. All from which I draw my being, all from and in which I have my life and powers, says to all that I am, “Come, do this with and

in and for me, and so find thyself, and know thyself my partner, and enter into fellowship with me, which is life's highest good and honour." And thus I see how my own highest good—in the fellowship with the Whole that gave me life—is essentially one with my endeavour for others' good.

This implied faith makes itself felt even in wrong-doing. For in wrong-doing I am aware that the self, in yielding to instinctive or passionate pressure, is identifying itself with what is only a fragment of the whole self, and at the same time is injuring the world of which I am a part. The treachery of self to self is at the same time treachery to the universe.

This faith implied in all personal activity has been ignored by both ethics and theology, apparently in the interests of mutual exclusiveness. Most ethical theories pay for this at their weak point. We have seen that those who make pleasure the measure of rightness are compelled to talk about higher and lower pleasures, and thus to rely on a faith which they generally ignore. And both they and those who speak of self-realization as the highest good, have to assume that when we do the best for ourselves in these matters we are at the same time doing the best for others, which is not a conclusion from experience and is indeed nothing but a faith involving what must revolutionize the theory that requires it.

On the theological side, we remember that Kant sought to justify faith in God as a postulate required by the moral imperative. But to insert a logical step between God and our ethics is bad for both. Can an imperative be absolute if it requires a postulate? If God

speaks in the moral law, are we to say, "You have said this—we presume you mean also this other thing which you omitted to say." Surely if any sort of belief is to come in connection with an absolute imperative, it must be one which the imperative itself involves and affirms, as we have seen it does.

On the other hand, if we do not find the root of religious faith here, where are we to find it? It is not an indubitable deduction from facts, for that is knowledge in the ordinary sense. Still less is it a hypothesis, for a hypothesis is a guess, adopted seriously but always on the understanding that further experience may lead to its abandonment. Faith is untrue to itself unless it is held with a sureness with which a hypothesis ought not to be held. Nor has faith ever been a hypothesis to those whom we have been used to take as its best exponents.

Some will say that religious belief has its ground in authority. And no doubt such authority has a wholesome place in the immature stages of life, where the root of religious authority is in personal confidence of a general, and especially of an ethical, sort. The child believes what his parents believe because he trusts and admires them. But we soon learn that parents and other adults are not infallible and if we then believe anything on authority, it is because we have particular assurance as to the credibility of the authority, either for reasons of the ordinary, fallible sort, or because we already have faith in the authority as an authority. If I believe what the Bible or the Church says because they say it, my faith in what they say depends on my already having faith in them. So that faith on authority presupposes

faith obtained in some other way. Otherwise it is affirmation induced by strong suggestion, which is really taking a statement as true by refraining from considering its truth ; and it is clear that any faith thus obtained will be antagonistic to the faith implied in all serious thinking—the faith that by serious thinking we come nearer to the truth.

There are also some whose experience in worship, or in some other specifically religious form, is so profound and marked that they have no difficulty in believing in God ; but faith of this sort is available only to those who have experience of this sort, and they can tell others of no way to such experience except one that demands the faith to which it is supposed to lead. And however valuable the assurance of God that thus comes with specific religious experience, it cannot offer itself as the explicit form of the faith implied in our personal activities, for they can gain explicitness for the faith implied in them only by that which sustains and enhances their activity, and not by a special activity working apart by itself. The man who in a moment of religious ecstasy is sure of the presence of God is not necessarily thereby helped to conscious possession of the faith implied in all serious thinking and right acting : the ecstatic experience may make him sceptical of other contacts with God. And without the concurrence of the faith implied in thinking and acting, the faith grounded on particular religious experience cannot bring itself into wholesome contact with life ; nor can these two sorts of faith meet on fair terms unless both have an equal degree of explicitness. So that faith founded on specific religious experience is not likely to be healthy

unless the faith implied in all personal activity comes to simultaneous explicitness, which, in the case of people of vivid religious experience, often happens without their recognition of the distinction. When it does not happen, we get obscurantist and unethical religion, which is one of the greatest obstacles of faith to all who have any contact with its devotees.

We also often find a puzzling reluctance to recognize so near a relation between ethics and religion, the charge being made that morality is cold and formal. But ought not a man to believe? And if he ought, is not faith part of morality? Is not the ultimate object of faith the goodness of God, and is not goodness a moral quality? We may be told, "But faith is the gift of God." Doubtless, and the faith God gives tells us that mind and will are also his gifts, and if God did not make all these gifts one, he gave his children a blade without a handle. It seems rather that, in so far as our religious faith is not the explicitness of our moral faith, it must lack a wholesome sureness and be in danger of becoming a substitute for goodness.

These implied affirmations of our personal activity concern just what our religious faith concerns—our souls and God and their mutual relations—and they are made with that absolute assurance without which religion strains and confuses rather than saves us. But these affirmations implied in our personal activity come to only very partial explicitness even in our highest moments of endeavour, whereas our life needs to have them as a permanent, conscious possession, or rather as the growingly effective and joyful recognition of That by which we are possessed.

(2)

The need of giving explicitness to the faith implied in our best activities is manifold. Personality cannot develop without a growing understanding of itself, without making clear and thorough the principles of its working, and so coming to greater effectiveness and inward unity.

The moral life itself is urged in this direction for its own sake. Because this faith is only implied in certain activities and is not a constant, conscious possession I often find that when the occasion for those activities comes I am unprepared, slothful, cowardly, passion-driven : I find myself shirking the opportunity, avoiding the issue, surprised into letting the wrong thing through into act. And also if I do not recognize, humbly and surely, that human righteousness is a response to, and a concurrence with, the greater good of the universe, then the memory of my good deed becomes an incentive to self-righteous gratulation, and I begin to do righteousness to be seen of men, myself among them.

The same urgent need for getting open possession of this implied faith appears when we remember that, so far as we are self-conscious and active beings, every action, whether it concerns ourselves or our fellows, turns directly or indirectly upon what we really think of ourselves, and this again turns upon what we really think of life as a whole and of the universe in which we live, and from which we have life. This general notion as to the quality of the self, life and the whole of which self and life are parts, directs and expresses itself in all our conscious handling of life, affecting our

moods, our judgments of others, our reactions, our ambitions. We may never put it into words and it often differs greatly from our professed creed, which may be adopted (though we do not recognize the true nature of the process) merely because the adoption contributes to aims founded on this deeper and quite other notion ; for what we profess, but do not spontaneously believe, is more often a feather in our cap than in our wings. The only conscious faith that can be part of this effective notion of self is one which we cannot disbelieve, one that is grounded in the very stuff of our being. And if this notion of self is to be wholesome and adequate, it must make room for the absolutely sure affirmations implied in all our personal activities, and it cannot be sure of doing so until these affirmations are available as explicit faith.

The need which our general idea of ourselves has of these sure elements appears especially in two ways. The instability or ungroundedness of our emotional attitude towards ourselves is notorious. We are not quite sure whether we should think well or ill of ourselves ; consequently we are apt to pass from extremes of self-laudation to extremes of self-dispraise—neither being quite sincere—or to make permanent a self-satisfaction or a diffidence, neither of which is pure enough to bring us the strength of a genuine confidence or humility, and either of which our friends would think ungrounded. This emotional instability is due to our habitually acting upon an idea of self which does not square with the realities of life and is therefore liable to be made very uncomfortable by our formally accepted creed of life, which, though nearer to realities,

has never been really appropriated by us. We do not live in the higher and truer, but it raids our settlement in the lower, though in this respect some people seem to have acquired almost complete immunity.

Then, too, having no stable core for our estimate of ourselves, we are very sensitive to what others think and say of us, and are eager to find in their opinion a buttress for our self-satisfaction. And so come pains that bring no wisdom and scars that bring no glory. Hence, too, ambition for power and the urge to act for popularity, fame, notoriety, that we may find in the envy or respect of others a counterweight for the suspected reluctance of our own self-respect.

The need for making explicit the faith implied in all personal activity is, of course, seen in the history of religion, for it may be said that, with rare and accountable exceptions, we nowhere find men without explicit religious faith, while the relation of religious faith to wholesome human achievement is closer still.

The experience connected with what we call the uncanny, the weird, the supernatural, or, as it is fashionable to call it since Professor Otto's best-known book, "the numinous," is a characteristically human experience and may be regarded as the first movement towards explicitness of the faith implied in personal activity. In the numinous experience man does not say to himself, as in the case of other experience of the unknown, "This unknown may have some importance which I must discover": he says in effect, "This is of utmost importance, but cannot be investigated by ordinary means. Something should be done, but it is not the world of my ordinary seeing and handling that

can tell me what." He affirms a range of being and experience other than that which his hands and eyes usually deal with, yet of more importance to him, touching not this or that point of his well-being, but indefinitely and awfully potent over the whole of it. Such an experience would seem to be inevitable in the development of that process which begins with the apprehension of a world over against the self. If man's consciousness of his own activity sets him over against all that is not self and makes him aware of a world in which he lives, the development of his mind must very soon bring the gathering of life's interests into some sort of a whole as the connected interests and fortunes of the self, a whole that at first would be rather felt than intelligently apprehended. Now the known is known by its touching this or that particular interest, so that anything unknown which impresses the man as important will impress him as all-important, as that in which his whole being is or may be fatally affected. Hence the self as a whole will come to be connected strongly and emotionally with Something in the world, unknown through ordinary channels but superlatively potent for good or evil.

Through apprehension of this tremendous Unknown, man gained courage to live, for once apprehended it must by all means be conciliated, and, with this great Unknown to friend, all other fears could be faced. In this way primitive man solved the major problem of his personal life. For despite the oft-repeated saying that fear made the first gods, it is nearer truth to say that in his gods man found his first effective antidote to fear. The big brain, by whose contrivances man survived in

a world of animals better armed than himself, had this inevitable disadvantage, that the growth of intelligence made him uncomfortably aware of the unfamiliar and unexplored, which imagination was only too quick to people with all manner of ill possibilities. His intelligence was fear-ridden until he could find means to make the Unknown his friend, and this he did by acts which expressed a bond of kinship between himself and the Unknown, or appropriated the power of the Unknown for his own good. So that the religious faith which he made conscious to himself by his cult was his counterpart of his faith in himself as a thinking, willing being, and gave him courage to exercise his human activities. Generally we may say that with the powers and risks of personality comes the belief that the most important thing in the world is its control by a power or powers possessing thought, emotion, and will, and that the most important thing in life is to recognize this power and get into right relations with it. The vagueness of the primitive idea of self is reflected in the vagueness of the Pacific islander's "mana" and the Redskin's "orenda", terms for more or less loose power in the world which, by the use of proper means, he may appropriate. Later come the attribution of spirits to various important phenomena, and totemism with its friendly ancestor for man in the non-human reaches of the world.

The notion that in their earlier stages religion and ethics developed apart from each other is now generally abandoned. No doubt, the earliest effect of man's religion was rather upon his general activities than upon what we could call his ethics, but that was because

as yet man did not differentiate between ethical and other activity. Before conduct becomes deliberate and morality conscious, the relation of ethics and religion must be different from what they are at a later stage. When all conduct was ruled by unquestioned custom, always, alongside what we should call ethical acts, we find a number of religious acts of what we should call a ceremonial nature. Both were regarded as equally necessary parts of life, and it was probably the only way in which what is to us the element of faith implied in moral action could become explicit to the more primitive mind. The next stage, very frequently reached, regards the laws of conduct as the command of a divine law-giver, and in some cases a further stage is reached in which God is believed to be more concerned with moral conduct than with ritual. Then, concomitant with the development of personality and the increasing ethical element in religion, we have the tendency to monotheism, i.e. over against the growing urge to the inward unification of personality is apprehended a universe unified in one sovereign Spirit. This concomitance of personality in man and God is seen in the two greatest of the world's religious developments—the Hebrew, in which the supreme value of human personality has its counterpart in an intensely personal God, and the Indian, in which the denial of the reality of human personality goes with the denial of personality to God.

But despite the close relationship between ethical and religious faith, we find to-day a number of thinking people who would readily acknowledge the faith involved in their best activity but have no sure and explicit belief

in God. This is no doubt partly due to their attempt to find the ground of faith in the wrong place, but it is also due to great intrinsic difficulties, which we must now consider.

(3)

One of the most obvious difficulties in making explicit the implied affirmations of our ethical life is the pain and evil of the world. Our sureness that justice, truth, and kindness are absolutely obligatory affirms that these qualities are dominant in God, but the amount and degree of unmerited pain and of moral evil in the world cry out against our faith.

Of course, these difficulties have been met. It would seem that in the nature of things there cannot be life without the possibility of pain. And it is clear (as the prologue of Job hints) that a world without unmerited pain would be one in which loyalty, self-sacrifice, unselfishness, and heroism were impossible. It is also clear that the possibility of moral evil is the inevitable price of moral freedom enough for a real appropriation of good. So that if God wanted the existence of life and human goodness, it could only be at the cost of possible pain and evil.

The answer is logically cogent, but does not easily satisfy, because it is very difficult to have a convincing faith in such a degree of goodness in God as the explanation demands. For if God sees pain to be worth while, he must know what pain is, which can be done only by feeling it : it means that he so loves life as to bear the pain that it involves. So, too, if he allows human

evil because to him human goodness is worth it, he must know the evil of sin, which means that he suffers for it more than the sinner does. And it is very difficult to be completely convinced that the goodness of God is of this heroic sort. The situation is, that in view of the pain and evil of the world, if we are to believe in the goodness of God at all, we must believe he is good to a degree beyond the standard we acknowledge as really obligatory upon ourselves and others, and certainly far beyond our achievement. In view of the world's evil and our own imperfect life, it would seem that God cannot be good at all without being too good to be true.

Another side of the same state of things is that God seems to demand from men a higher and costlier sort of goodness than he himself exercises. What does God know of the self-sacrifice he calls for? It is morally confusing if a moral command comes from one whose goodness is not such as to evoke the goodness demanded; and when that one is God it confuses faith.

Another difficulty is that, whatever may be the affirmations as to the goodness of God implied in my truly human activities, my ordinary life is apt to be on a lower level, where safety, comfort, reputation, etc., are the important considerations, leading me into habits of thought in which I ignore the implications of my best activities, shirk the call of their occasion, and do things that explicitly deny them. I become confused, for my faith has been denied by my own act. My acts attach themselves to me in a system of activities and ideas that has no thoroughfare to the level of activity in which faith is implied. I have become involved in two incompatible systems of activity, and consequently have

confused and weakened my whole inward life. While I adhere to the lower, I am living, thinking, acting on a plane that ignores, and implies denial of, my faith. If I attempt to resume the higher, then to the weakness in which I originally deserted it, is added the knowledge that I have acted, and claimed to find my satisfaction in acting, as an enemy to its indications. And to this picture of confusion and weakness must be added the dishonesty with which I try to tell myself that the wrong is right, while the need to tell myself so, shows that at heart I know otherwise, for the hungry man does not have to argue himself into believing that he has an appetite.

It is not that the affirmations of my moral activity have become less sure, but that I live on a level that ignores them, a level on which I am inwardly sure of nothing. For sureness of this sort requires an inward concurrence and unity of soul (such as comes in its highest moments) while the life we are usually content to live is one on which, instead of inward unity or valiant endeavour for it, we have makeshifts and compromises and "rationalizations", and our personality is held together by habit and circumstance and convention rather than by inward conviction.

The fact is that the religious implications of personal activity, affirming as they do the kinship of the human and divine, refer from the human to the divine by way of our personality as an inward whole, whereas, in our common level of living, just when we need what is implied in our highest moments to hold us together, we are sinking towards a disintegration where the self lacks that unity that speaks its saving truth. And if we still

affirm the goodness of God, the affirmation carries the corollary that we have betrayed and wronged his goodness and thwarted his goodwill. We arrive at a point where, so far as our internal resources are concerned, we are at an impasse : we cannot go on digging without the water we are digging for.

To put it from a slightly different point of view, in the will to do right there is implicitly affirmed a faith that a will governs the universe, a will the moral quality of which is declared in the right act. But we have done wrong and have obstructed and thwarted God's will and perverted the powers that are his gift. If God is to pardon such ill doing, his goodness is of a higher sort than was implied in the right we forsook. And even if this were not so and our former relation to him could be restored, what is to hold us from again betraying his trust ? When we have done wrong it seems that nothing can restore us but the assurance of a far higher quality of goodness in God than our own resources can affirm, the assurance of a goodness great enough to pardon at a cost greater than that from which we shrank, and therefore great enough so to engage our loyalty that it will be stronger in us than it was before we went wrong. A cheap pardon cannot save us, and yet it is all that our immature and now corrupt resources can find credible.

If the implications of our best moments are to be a constant and conscious possession, if they are to overcome the evil to which we have given ourselves, if they are to be more than a reproach and a threat, then we need to find somewhere what we cannot find in ourselves—an achieved human goodness sustained

and complete to its costliest conclusions as our own is not. And this I find in Jesus Christ.

(4)

I find, as a simple fact of experience, that in contemplating the goodness of Jesus the faith implied in my personal activity becomes a conscious possession inexhaustibly potent to the overcoming of the drag of my past wrong-doing and to all other spiritual ends. Certain elements of this experience may be discerned. As a fact of history he disarms the objection which the pain and evil of the world offer to our faith. When we ask of the achieved goodness of Jesus, "Can the universe that produced this be evil?" the answer comes with the question. And the cogency of the answer appears if we further ask, "But can the universe that produced the evil man be good?" for whereas we know that evil life is life moving to untruth and disintegration, we recognize that the goodness of Jesus is life being true to itself. When we consider Jesus over against his opponents, we have no doubt as to which is nearer to the truth and reality of life. We see also that the goodness of Jesus could not have grown into itself in a world where unmerited pain and moral evil were impossible. Nor can we be unmindful that the goodness of Jesus which compels reference to the goodness of God evinces itself most convincingly in his death, which also shows undeserved suffering and moral evil in their extreme forms. Another consideration here is that the goodness of God as shown in the goodness of Jesus is a goodness great enough to bear the pain of the world

for the sake of life's values and the greater pain of sin for the sake of the possibilities of a true and free human goodness.

His life also answers the doubt that comes with the question, "Is it not mere vanity for such a poor creature as man to think that he can find anything of God in his own activity?" For when we consider Jesus, the question loses edge: we see a human life that can add majesty and power to any notion of God.

I see also that the goodness of Jesus which emboldens my implied faith to affirm itself openly in the face of all the facts of the world, was itself achieved in, and by, this very conviction of the goodness of God, which was the mainspring and direction of all that he was. And with this went the conviction of his ability and duty to bring others into true fellowship with God. These things, which were the essential factors of his life, thus agree with the effect of his life on the essential factors of my own.

But these considerations are rather confirmatory than concerned with the central and essential help that Jesus brings to our need. My experience is that the achieved goodness of Jesus by its very quality as truest and completest goodness gives such content to the faith implied in all my truly personal activity—faith in God's goodness as measured by what I know to be good—that this implied faith not only becomes an explicit and constant possession but puts me into the hands of a divine goodness that holds me and reshapes my life to its own issues. By his life and death Jesus gives such content to the absolute affirmations implied in my moral

activity that he fixes them upon God and so gives me what I need.

It is the very opposite of my experience to stipulate for the miraculous in Jesus in order that I may prove his goodness to be divine, though this argument is not uncommonly commended. If we cannot recognize God in the highest goodness we know, how would it help matters for God to infringe the order of his universe? Or how should we recognize the supposed infringement as his?

It may perhaps here occur to someone that the goodness of any good man or woman would serve to help into explicitness the faith implied in our ethical life. And up to a point this is true. Few of us are without those who have helped us in this way. But it would probably be difficult to find an instance of this that was really effective and was not at the same time a tacit reference to Jesus Christ, as the one in whom the good man or woman would acknowledge the source of their own good. For unless the human goodness before us is of the sort capable of exercising a continual, triumphant power upon us, we shall still continue on the low level of our living, and the partial explicitness of our faith will do little more than gild the top points of our confusion. But it is characteristic of our contemplation of Jesus that it evokes in us the very activities of wonder, loyalty, truth, and goodwill in which are implied the affirmations which he emboldens to be explicit and fills with effective content.

The characteristic of Jesus' life was an impassioned self-devotion to men, fired by a passion for God and interpreted as a response to him. The Buddha found

in love a means of escape from self : Jesus found in it the secret of self as the child of God. The urgency of his endeavour, measured by the cross with all its agony of body and soul, comes to us convincingly as the measure of the urgency of God's love, assuring us of a love which our sin cannot cancel and which therefore suffers for our sin. It thus not only gives pardon but evokes a loyalty that makes us sincerely hate the evil and supremely desire the good.

And I see that goodness of this redemptive sort is the only forthright way of goodness : it must either overcome thus or degenerate. The supreme self-giving of Jesus was not regarded by him as a work of supererogation : to go other than the way he went was to him temptation to evil.

So that here I find assurance of what I specially need—to know that the goodness of God is the goodness of redemptive love, that my wrong-doing has not destroyed his love for me. That which gives me assurance of God and God's character gives me also redemption ; and both the revelation and the redemption will be inadequately and mistakenly considered, if considered apart from the other.

Nor can the other various members of the whole experience live apart. For just as I become openly sure of God only in finding a redemptive goodness in him, so, having thus known God, I cannot now dispense with Jesus, as a fact whose only use was to introduce a truth ; for he is continually essential to the evoking in me of the activity of thought, emotion, and will in which I find my affirmation of his truth. My own

spiritual activity, God, and Jesus are thenceforth for me the three essential strands of wholesome life.

The too low level of my living continues, but its gradient is up, not down, for the explicitness of my faith is now secured for me by the fact of Jesus and his achieved goodness, and is not at the mercy of my own achievement. My own way of living may still reflect a self lacking in inward unity and therefore incapable of interpreting God surely, but I have in the self of Jesus an abiding way to sure and potent affirmation of God, and of a God whose goodness commands hopefully my whole personality and puts a continual upward strain upon the level of my living.

And when the instincts are roused to massive movement, I have in the recollection of the death of Jesus that which, when it confronts them, will constrain many of them to desert to his side and the rest to subside ashamed.

And with regard to the wrong things I have done, I find now that if I worry about them beyond the finding and taking of all possible means of reparation, it is mostly, not because they deny God's goodness, but because they call my own reputation in question, or would do so if they were known by others. I find that much of the so-called sense of sin is disappointed or scared vanity, regretting acts rather because they were disreputable than because they were wrong, and seldom concerned with the real sins of life—lack of love to God and man. In Jesus I learn that the real sin is the very care for my own reputation with myself and others above the concerns of God. To kick ourselves for our past sin is not to repent : it is probably only the

kicking self endeavouring to evince its own excellence. A true sense of sin is the recognition that God loves us despite the things in us now that hurt his love. The humility of this recognition is the breach through which faith brings in the joy and power of God's love as we know it in Jesus.

CHAPTER II

OBJECTIONS

FOR the sake of simplicity the last chapter proceeded without stopping to deal with objections, many of which have no doubt occurred to its readers. Here we shall consider some of them, not merely because of their intrinsic importance as objections, but because every important objection is a means to elucidation.

(1)

It has been sometimes said that the attempt to find in the affirmations of conscience a clue to the nature of reality or to the character of God is hopeless, since different people are convinced that different and even contradictory things are right.

It must first be considered that the absolute certainty of moral action does not, or ought not to, extend to all parts of it. I am absolutely certain that I ought to be kind, but I can never have the same certainty about the means I use to the ends of kindness, though in common practice this distinction is liable, with manifold ill results, to be ignored.

The recognition of absolute obligation to act in a certain spirit is a comparatively late development, preceded by a time when definite acts were enjoined by law either with divine or social sanction, and this

again was preceded by a time when conduct was shaped by unquestioned custom. All these stages overlap, the earliest persisting into the present. The result is that a man may easily confuse the imperative of unquestioned custom with the imperative of absolutely obligatory spirit, and not recognize in this respect the difference between raising his hat and thinking honestly. The confusion is made the easier because old custom often offers the most effective means for good intent.

At all stages the recognition of a supremely authoritative element in his morality seems essential to man. The savage's unquestioning obedience to inherited custom, whenever it expresses itself in words, reflects an unbounded reverence for the past that brought him forth. The prohibitions of taboo are enforced by such overwhelming and indefinite terrors as to be practically absolute. Then comes the barbarian stage when rules of conduct are regarded as laid down by a god or gods. Later still God comes to be thought of as concerned not so much with outward conduct as with motive and spirit. And so we come to the deliberative conscience which is unanimous in recognizing an absolute obligation to truth, justice, and kindness. That the human spirit, with many variations and through many stages, thus comes to concurrence of conviction is the only sort of unanimity that can signify anything in this connection, for that in which all men at all stages are unanimous can be little, if anything, more than their physical necessities.

If the thought of the last chapter was sound, then in right action there is a partnership of the human with the divine, and we should expect that at all stages it will

show elements both of the fallible and of the absolute, and that the development of human conduct will be towards a clearer distinction of these two elements, as their co-operation becomes more vital and effective. And this we do find.

(2)

Many modern psychologists declare that the moral side of our nature is a development of the gregarious instinct, and that when it seems to us that in doing the right we are following not our own whim but a greater will than our own, the will of the universe, or of God, it is really nothing but the will of the herd making itself felt in the unrecognized stirrings of our gregarious instinct.

A rather older alternative to this theory was that morality had its ground and driving power in the self-regarding instinct. The alternative is strange, for there can be few instincts so often and acutely in opposition to each other as the self-regarding and the gregarious, while it is clear that in the moral life of man both of them play important parts.

But neither yields a satisfactory explanation of moral obligation. How can self-regard be the driving or directing force in a development that culminates in the obligation to love with a love that "seeketh not its own"? How could it lead to such conduct as "in honour preferring one another"? Acts done in apparent unselfishness or self-forgetfulness are an essential element in every fully developed character, but such an act done consciously as a means to the ends

of self-regard would lose its power to contribute to wholesome character. Self-regard must stultify self-knowledge if it is to pose as the power behind the throne of the moral imperative.

And when it is said that behind "ought" lies the pressure of the gregarious instinct, we want to know why it is that the occasions on which a man is most conscious of the moral imperative are characteristically those in which it bids him stand alone, with all the known pressures of the gregarious instinct against him. If it is answered that he appeals from the present crowd to an ideal crowd of choice souls, then we must point out that when a man stands alone it is often in loyalty to truth, i.e. to something that is independent of any crowd. In any case, we have to ask how the gregarious instinct can compass the defeat of its own heavy and aggressive battalions in favour of an imaginary few. What is it that thus splits the instinct and makes the smaller fragment outweigh the larger? It cannot be the instinct itself. And then, too, in man the gregarious instinct works characteristically by swamping self-criticism and independent thought, both of which are essential and important elements of mature morality.

Macbeth, Act I, scene 7, affords a study of the part that the self-regarding and gregarious instincts play in the matter of right and wrong. It begins with Macbeth's soliloquy in which he at first debates the likeliness of satisfactory result from the proposed murder, then comes to the moral quality of the deed, recognizes "the deep damnation of his taking-off", and decides not to do it. When his wife enters he tells her of this resolution, but gives as the reason, not the wrongness of the deed,

but that it would affect badly his now high reputation with "all sorts of people", a reason in which both the self-regarding and gregarious instincts combine. She sweeps him from his resolution by reminding him of the glory of the prize and taunting him with unmanliness in shrinking from the deed that will win it—

"Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem . . . ?"

He would, she says, sink in self-regard for not daring to take the highest glory of the gregarious instinct, the place of herd-leader. And so, because he is silent of the something more than instinct, Macbeth's self-regarding instinct and his herd instinct combine to make him murderer now that his wife's presence and speech stimulate both instincts above the pitch to which the moral respects of his soliloquy had reduced them. It would seem, therefore, that Shakespeare did not find the secret of conscience in either of these instincts.

The problem of personality from the psychological point of view is the harmonizing of conflicting instincts, and it is obviously unlikely that we shall find the means to this in any one instinct. As a matter of fact we generally seek, and often find, a solution to the conflict of instincts in action for consciously valued ends, as against action under instinctive pressures. There is, of course, a relation between the values and the instinctive pressures. The value consciously desired may coincide with the strongest instinctive pressure, as when a man marries for love; or may suppress the more massive instinctive pressure in favour of the

slighter, as when the starving man saves his food for another ; or may inhibit the instinctive in favour of what is not instinctive at all, as when a man overcomes fear in the interests of truth. Conscious determination of action always involves both a system of values and the faith that this system is a valid interpretation of reality and that action upon it will put a man into wholesome relation with reality. Conscious initiative involves a faith that the relation of reality to consciousness is of a sort that could not be unless reality was dominated by that which has a sense of values. For the same sense of reality and values that compels us to face facts enables us to sacrifice life for truth.

Every psychiatrist will acknowledge that the harmonization of instincts within the self cannot be effected without the harmonization of the self with its world. To feel oneself out of joint with the world is to be in conflict with oneself. Yet the essentially wholesome harmony is neither physical nor social—men in acute danger and universal unpopularity have known the greatest inward peace—it is rather a spiritual harmony. For how can there be harmony between a self whose essence is activity for values and a universe which he suspects to be indifferent to all values ? His sanity would depend upon his assuming that which his philosophy doubts or denies. Whereas if he wholeheartedly believes that the ultimate power of the universe values most what he values most, then the heart of his peace is beyond the touch of fortune.

Personality as emotional and active intelligence is doomed to unending inward contradiction and conflict unless it can find what is both a supreme value and an

absolute imperative. And to a thinking being no value can be supreme and no command absolute except one that declares itself as speaking for the universe which gives personality its birth and nature. These two facts taken together show the inseparable unity of ethics and religion.

(3)

The objection may be made that the moral freedom on which so much of our argument depends has been denied by theology, science, and psychology. We need not be detained by the theological objection that if we allow real freedom of will to man, we infringe the sovereignty of God : it sets aside the direct affirmation of our spiritual life for a consideration which has no ground in experience and which in professing to uphold the sovereignty of God reduces him to the maker and owner of designedly self-deceived automata, made to think that they are free when they are not, lest they should complain when he punishes them for doing what he decreed that they should do. Physical science, we are now told, has lifted its embargo from moral freedom, having discovered in its own province hints of unpredetermined alternatives. But psychological determinism to-day presents itself with great assurance (though it consoles us to remember that according to psychology assurance of statement is often a sign of feared and unacknowledged uncertainty). The psychological determinist bids us choose any number we like, and tells us that though we may think we are quite free in the choice, he will show us by the application

of his technique that our choice was quite strictly determined by motives at work in the unconscious regions of our mind. He proceeds to do so quite successfully, and tells us that his success shows that, in what we take to be moral freedom, we are really in the same way controlled by unconscious motives. The experiment presupposes that we are not conscious why we should choose any number rather than any other, that is, we deliberately inhibit all conscious motive and hand the determination to whatever other determinants there may be, and the psychologist, to his credit, discovers what these unrecognized motives are. But because he can discover our unrecognized motives when we are trying to act without motive (which we have no business to do), it hardly follows that, when we are conscious of choosing between motives, our consciousness deceives us.

Psychological determinists also remind us that when a man under hypnotism is told after waking to do a certain thing, he will do it and give his own motives for doing it, thinking he chooses to do so, and being quite unaware that he is really doing it because of the hypnotic suggestion. So, we are told, the fact that we think we are free to choose is no guarantee that we really are so. But here we are dealing with an abnormal state of mind artificially induced, and we must be slow to impugn the general honesty of a function because, under abnormal conditions, it can be tricked into unverity. After all, this is only an extreme and artificial case of a common condition. We often feel an urge to certain activity without being fully aware of its origin : in fact most of the traffic between the

instincts and conscious activity begins in this way, and without care and honesty is apt to continue so. Much of a girl's interest in boys does not recognize its roots, and self-regard may throughout life be allowed to remain hidden while it pulls the strings. One of the most important parts of conscious control of life is to unearth the true nature of these urges and to inhibit or allow them as may seem good. The psychologist assures us that we can never be fully aware of the real nature of all these urges, but that nevertheless they can be utilized and turned to good account in a wholesome scheme of conscious endeavour by a process which he calls sublimation. And this is very much what our hypnotized man has done: he allows the urge by finding a place for it in his conscious scheme of life, the main difference being that in his (abnormal) case the urge was by artificial means very much more exactly defined than is otherwise usual. In this connection it is of greatest significance that commands given under hypnosis are not carried out when they bid a man do what in his waking state he holds to be morally wrong, that is, that a man can choose to refuse this urgency if he sees a sufficient reason for so doing.

The assertion of the psychological determinist that when we think we are free in choice we are really being controlled by motives of which we are not conscious breaks down whenever we can test the unconscious motives that are connected with what seems to be a genuine case of moral choice (as distinct from the "choose-a-number" non-moral choice). In many people who live a life of continence the sex instinct, unrecognized in waking hours, betrays through dreams

its dominance in the unconscious. Are we to believe that these people in making the choice to be continent, a choice which they think to be free and which is effective, are really determined by the sex instinct which, their dreams tell us, is more clamorous than others in the unconscious? That which controls the dream certainly does not in this case control the man. And the same is clearly true of all moral choices made against the push of strong and stimulated instinct: to say that the freedom which a man here thinks he has is really control by unconscious instinctive urges is absurd, for the instinctive urges concerned and recognized are generally those whose very presence in consciousness indicates their dominance in the unconscious also—fear, sex, etc.—and the action is carried in the teeth of them.

To claim moral freedom does not, of course, mean that we claim to act without motive, but that the determining motive is consciously adopted. Far from denying that tendencies to act come from motives the springs of which are in the unconscious, every man who tries to be honest with himself recognizes in himself impulses that do not tell their true story, and he knows well their strength and treachery in the moral struggle. Moral choice generally is a choice between a line of action inspired by a system of consciously assessed values and an act or line of action to which we are at the time most powerfully urged by stimulated instinct, as, for instance, on some occasion when we might by a lie save ourselves from ridicule.

The denial of moral freedom in the name of psychological determinism must meet the question: "What

then do you mean by conscious activity as distinct from conscious passivity ? ” If by conscious exertion of activity we can make the action other than it would otherwise be, is that not the effective exercise of choice ? If we cannot, then we must never regard consciousness as more than the passive registration of activities in which it has no other part, and the very marked distinction which we draw between our active and passive states, between the things we do and the things we suffer, is a delusion. And, so, to be conscious of effort after truth is to be plunged further into delusion than when we resign ourselves to day-dreaming. And if, when we think we choose and give consciously adopted direction to our actions, it is really no such thing, how is it that consciousness has biological value enough to secure not only its persistence but its enormous increase ? If the water turns the tap, why have a tap ?

We are conscious of a well-marked distinction between yielding and resisting, between being passive and active, and to deny the validity of this distinction is to renounce personality in favour of a uniquely miserable sort of thinghood. But in sane people no denial of this distinction is ever more than theoretical. If, however, the distinction is a valid one, then the activity of which we are conscious must be characterized by an element more internal to our being than the characteristic element of passivity, in which we are conscious of what happens to us. So that our sense of initiative cannot be resolved into sensations accompanying the innervation of muscles: otherwise there is no reason why the sensation of sneezing should not make us think we do it on our own initiative. A man may be conscious of moral yielding or passivity

in giving way to a fit of temper that involves peculiarly great innervation of muscles. Obviously, if there is such a thing as conscious initiative of activity, our knowledge of it cannot be derived from any experience in which the essential is received impressions, sense data, etc. Our recognition of our initiative must come in and with the act itself, i.e. it is an affirmation of the sort for which we have no other name than faith, an affirmation which is an essential part of the act about which it is made.

Personality is both a unity and a process of unification, based on, and progressing by, a principle of activity different in kind from all other known activities of the universe. It arises in the most elaborate and highly integrated of all physical organisms. Now a physical organism is itself a unity, a little system within the big system of the universe. The peculiarity of an organism is that any part of it is more intensely part of it than of the world. If you break a stone, each bit is as intimately part of the universe as it was of the whole stone: a severed limb is not as integral a part of the universe as it was of the body, or as the whole animal is of the universe. The unity of the members of a living organism is of another and more intrinsic sort than the unity which all things apparently have as parts of a systematic universe. And in calling the active principle of the organism life, we register our inability to account for that sort of unity by any of the forms of activity known apart from the living organism. The living organism appeared a little system within the big system of the universe, which seemed quite complete in itself before the little one by appearing gave evidence of an

active principle of unity not hitherto apparent in the big one.

Now personality has an original unity in its continuum of experience from the fact that one physical organism is the seat of one personality, its experience being a unity in the sense of being the experience of one subject. But the characteristic of mind is a bent towards greater and greater inward unity and harmony of experience and activity, coherent in thought, feeling, and will. In this endeavour it has a very long way to go before it approaches the marvellous inward unity and balance of the physical organism. Now if man's activity is nothing but the resultant of the total forces which through inheritance or environment impinge upon him, so that he is only the clearing-house where they come into contact with each other and find their resultant, then his almost perfectly organized physical system would only act the less smoothly in this by becoming the seat of the very much less well organized consciousness. But if, when living organisms first appeared, there appeared a principle of activity new to the world, it may also be that the advent of personality was an event of like newness. The need and therefore the driving force pressing the mind to more intrinsic unity do not seem to come from the physical organism, which is already a very much more completely integrated unity than the mind. It seems as though, to serve its needs, the organism evolves the mind, but once so evolved the mind moves ever towards its own inward harmony (sometimes to the cost of the organism) for no other reason than the bent of its own nature. And when we find the mind affirming that this activity

is its own initiative and is free and must in the use be recognized as such or be stultified, then to say that it is mistaken is to presume that the intelligible account which an activity gives of itself in the terms of known factors may be disqualified by appeal to the far less known, which can give no intelligible account of it at all.

Ethical faith, as we have seen, affirms that in choosing the right we will the will of the universe, i.e. we co-operate with it as akin, and are not merely wrought upon as things. This means a new sort of being in the universe, standing in a new relation to the order of the universe, and bringing a new element of activity into that order. That intelligence can control conduct and that thinking can bring us nearer to truth are both affirmations of faith, incapable of logical deduction from facts, but made by, and essential to, all effort of thought or will ; and these affirmations include the affirmation of a freedom which involves a break in the hitherto observable order of the world by the emergence of an activity working in accordance with a larger and more inclusive order. If a part which has hitherto acted under pressure of other parts develops a mind which apprehends a universal mind ordering and giving meaning and purpose to the whole, and begins to act in accordance with that apprehension, its action will be different from the action to which it has hitherto been blindly thrust, and will appear as a break in the order hitherto obtaining. And conscious co-operation with the will of the whole means that the intellect and activity of the minor being are one with each other ; and such oneness could not be experienced without conscious freedom of choice

in face of the alternative either of continuing to be pushed or of exercising initiative of co-operation with the greater will. This moral freedom thus appears at the transition from a world of things to a world of persons : it is the act of birth of God's children, their acceptance of personality, which must be freely accepted to be truly their own. To do wrongly is to use this freedom in order to renounce it.

(4)

Someone who has not read the first chapter very carefully may object that in it our wish is father to our thought, or, in more exact language, that it involves the unwarrantable transition from value judgments to existential judgments. He will warn us that, however much we may desire any proposition to be true, however disastrous it would be for us if it were not true, these considerations do not prove that it is true ; and he will bid us to keep this in mind in connection with our moral values and not to conclude that because this or that thing may seem needful for our moral activity that therefore we have a right to believe that it actually is : in particular, we must not argue that if there is no God, the bottom falls out of our moral life, and therefore there must be a God.

But the first chapter does not maintain that our doing right depends upon our possession of certain beliefs ; rather it points out that the very act of doing right is the affirmation of a certain faith, though the affirmation is more implied than patently expressed. And it is surely not illegitimate to argue that both the existence

of such a faith and its content are very significant of the nature of the universe in which we find them.

The activity of the universe, or, to speak more correctly, the activity which is the universe, has culminated in the production of self-consciousness in man, and self-conscious activity is characteristically activity for values, while moral judgment proclaims itself as the most important, inclusive, practical, and urgent of all judgments of value. It tells me what, before all things, without ifs and buts, is to be done here and now : it is the valuing of all values. That the activities of our evolutionary universe culminate in a being, who, as its most highly developed product, finds his own activity culminating in the activities of moral judgment, is surely highly significant of the nature of the universe. And in answer to the question, " What does it signify as to the nature of the universe that moral activity has this place in it ? " it is absurd not to give serious consideration to the reply implied in this moral activity itself.

What affirmations are implied in moral activity we have seen. And over and above the validity claimed by the fact that these affirmations confirm each other and are made with and in, and are vital to, the activities that constitute our personality, two considerations may be added :—

(1) If, as our ethical faith implies, the universe has its ground in a spiritual Being, then it is intelligible that it should produce personalities. No other intelligible suggestion as to how the universe came to produce personalities has ever been made.

(2) The universe, as science knows it, is energy, and

so far as our experience goes, nowhere but in the conscious activity of man is thought one with energy and therefore knows it from within. And only in right action do we find thought fully satisfied to be one with energy, i.e. only here are they as nearly one as may be ; and the inference is that here thought has its inmost contact with reality.

(5)

Another objection will very probably be : “ You confess that what makes your implied faith a conscious possession is Jesus Christ. You therefore rely on historic testimony, which can never give you the absolute sureness you claim.” And the results of modern critical work upon the Gospels give special point and weight to this objection.

The question of the relation of religious faith to the acceptance of historic fact is not simple. I have heard men say that they base their faith upon the facts of the Gospels as there recorded. But if faith of this sort is to be solid, then the facts should be so indubitable and the deductions so inevitable as to command the consent of every one capable of following a simple argument. But this does not happen. As a matter of fact those who thus claim to found their faith on fact, first accept their facts on faith. This attitude is the truncated survival of a time when every one in Christendom, on the authority of the Church, accepted the four Gospels as four independent and infallible records. Modern Biblical study has made this position no longer tenable. The almost unanimous conviction of modern

and competent New Testament scholars is that the First and Third Gospels make use of the Second and other sources, that all the Gospels contain legendary elements, and also differing accounts of events and utterances, of which we have to determine the more authentic as best we may, and that the Fourth Gospel is in the main less historic than the first three as a record of the words and acts of Jesus.

As soon as it was recognized to be a real and serious question as to what was genuinely historic in the Gospels and what was not, some felt that the whole basis of their faith was gone, while others tried to elaborate a Christianity that was independent of history. Both were wrong : Christian faith is neither independent of history nor dependent on our having an exact account of this or that particular event or utterance.

Recently, in several quarters, an attempt has been made to meet the situation by maintaining that our historic basis must be, not in the record of what Jesus was, but in the record of what the Church thought about him. The contention of the *Formgeschichtliche* school of New Testament students is accepted to the effect that until the writing of the Gospels, forty or more years after the beginning of the Church, it possessed (apart from the passion narrative) no connected story of the life of Jesus. It is, on the other hand, pointed out that we have at earlier points evidence everywhere of a religious and theological exaltation of Jesus, and also statements of fact in the terse credal form such as 1 Cor. xv, 3 ff., " I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures ; and that he

was buried ; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures . . .” The Church, it is maintained, was created by these religious and theological affirmations as to the person and death of Jesus, which are therefore our prime historic data—the interest in, and the record of, the ethical teaching, character, and life-story of Jesus being secondary and more questionable both as to authenticity and definiteness. But certain considerations make this position untenable.

The contents of Mark do not bear out the contention of the *Formgeschichtliche* school that our earliest evangelist had no connected narrative sources to work on apart from the passion narrative. Both in Mark vi, vii and in Mark viii we have the account of the feeding of the multitude (evidently variant accounts of the same incident), a journey across the lake, a conflict with the Pharisees, and a journey to the north, and both these series stand between the Galilean ministry and the advance to Jerusalem. So that the defects of Mark in the matter of chronological order are evidently due rather to his peculiar use of his sources than to lack of them. While his recording as two events what to us are obviously one seems to be due to an exaggerated confidence in the details of his sources, a confidence suggesting reverence for them as accepted authorities.

And when in 1 Cor. xv, 3 ff., Paul reminds his readers of what he had received and delivered unto them, his statement quite clearly relies on his readers' knowing more than it contained : they must know who Peter and James and the twelve and the apostles were (1 Cor. xv, 5-7). And such a statement as “ Christ

died for our sins " (1 Cor. xv, 3) bears so little obvious relation to the passion narrative (which, it is admitted, was current in the Church) that it could not have coexisted as an alternative statement, but must have been regarded as an interpretation, which needed the narrative more than the narrative needed an interpretation.

Another important consideration here is that though the Church's religious and theological estimate of Jesus is amply documented and is extremely significant, yet it is more difficult to understand and more conflicting than the Church's memory of the character and life of Jesus. When we compare two estimates like " Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God " (Acts ii, 22), and " The Word was God . . . and the Word became flesh " (John i, 1, 14), we are constrained to acknowledge that either they say very different things or are very unclear in what they say. And these are but two instances of a great number of other statements, which obviously represent quite different points of view, while it is very difficult to say precisely what any one of them meant. So that although the New Testament contains authentic record of what various members of the early Church thought about Jesus, we have it in expressions so divergent and difficult that, apart from the facts that lay behind it, we find in it no help to the historic element which our faith needs. To know that men called Jesus " Lord " means nothing to us unless we know what it was in Jesus that evoked the utterance.

In the first chapter we saw that the element of sureness in our faith was bound up with, and implied in, our highest, and especially our ethical, activity, and

that what we find in Jesus is that which helps this faith to explicitness by giving it contents which, in making it a consciously held possession, at the same time makes it effectively powerful. The question then is : "What is it in him that gives this help, and how is our reception of this help related to the historic quality of the Gospel narrative ? "

The answer is : " We have this help primarily in the positive, vivid, convincingly life-like picture of utter loyalty to truth and utterly self-giving love, which we contemplate and recognize as supreme goodness, and which we have in the Gospel narrative (especially in the first three), the picture itself being effective apart from any question of historicity." At first we might be inclined to stipulate for this much, that we must at least be assured that such a life was possible ; but this assurance goes with our assurance that it is really good, for we cannot in this sense call good what we believe to be impossible : we can say of no man that he ought to do what we know he cannot. So that an essential element in our consent that we have before us a picture of real goodness is our faith that such goodness is possible, and the conviction that such goodness is possible in the universe destroys the cogency of the facts that otherwise cry out against the faith implied in our ethics. For if such goodness is possible, then (considering that good life is nearer to truth and reality than bad life) the universe of which this is true, the universe that could produce this goodness, cannot be less than infinitely good at heart. So, too, in other ways described in the first chapter the conviction that the goodness attributed to Jesus was real goodness would

give such content to our implied faith as to make it an open possession and effective power.

But when we have thus seen that this picture of supreme goodness is in itself enough to make our implied faith explicit and triumphant, we begin to be moved towards the conclusion that behind the picture is real achievement. The process, the factors, and the validity of this conclusion we must now consider.

Probably there will be no disagreement with the proposition that the important thing in the history of Jesus is the supreme quality of his goodness. Even those who stress most the importance of the miraculous in his life will allow that this importance depends upon his unique goodness, for to them the office of miracle is to show that the goodness of Jesus is the goodness of God. But, as we have seen, any real goodness reflects, and convinces of, God : it does not need any miracle to attach it to God, for it attaches itself to him by its own implications. If we will not take the word of a friend, but demand a bond, friendship ceases : in the same way, the best that God would do for us cannot be mediated by any means but by the faith involved in all truly personal activity.

It may be objected that this distinction is beside the point, for if you cannot accept the record as unimpeachable when it tells of miracle, how can you accept it as true record of character ? But the record of goodness has a peculiar immunity from that which invention or the process of tradition inflicts on all else, and especially it is free from the sort of invention and enhancement to which the miraculous is subject in almost every ancient religious record. The history of religion

everywhere is full of miracle stories : we find them in the religions of to-day : Dr. Janet Miller, in *Jungles Preferred* (p. 124 f.), says that when the New Testament miracles were told to the natives of Central Africa, they at once retorted with what to them were much greater miracles performed daily in their own villages by the witch-doctor. But neither tradition nor invention has ever improved upon the Gospel picture of the goodness of Jesus. The apocryphal gospels find it easy to heighten the miraculous features of their story, but his goodness suffers in their report. The significance of these facts will be considered after we have glanced at certain others of like interest.

The following historic statements are not sanely questionable. During the first three centuries of our era the religion ultimately called Christianity rose and spread so effectively that in the fourth century it became the dominant religion of the Roman Empire. The movement came from a small section of the Jewish people, who, like Paul, the most notable, themselves looked back to its beginning in a Jew called Jesus, whom they believed to be the Messiah or Christ. This one Oriental religion outdistanced all others, some of which were already well established, and it did what they failed to do—it replaced the official religion of the Empire. Amongst other things, it established a family and sex life most astonishingly different from the family and sex life of the then world. Strangest of all, an essential moment of its career was that certain Jews, in direct contradiction of ingrained beliefs about providence and the Messiah and in the teeth of the

unequalled pressure of their racial sanctions, believed that a crucified man was the Messiah of God.

When we turn to the account which the origin of this movement gives of itself we find that the latter part of the New Testament consists of letters and pamphlets reflecting an unexampled joy and confidence and sense of power in life. Their writers are not recluses but men immersed in life by a spirit of love, the driving force of which they profess to find in this crucified man in whom they are so convinced of God's love that service becomes natural and joy inalienable.

The earlier part of this record tells of this man, Jesus. Amongst other things, there is attributed to him a collection of parables unique both in number and beauty, while no writer or other speaker of the New Testament shows himself able to create a parable, though it would often have served his purpose to do so. And there are attributed to him utterances, acts, and endurances, evincing a character unique in many respects, and especially in an invasive, boundless love of mankind and an open sureness of God.

These are admitted facts, and it seems not unreasonable, when all allowance is made for possible inaccuracies of record or transmission, to conclude that the explanation given is the true one, and that the movement took its origin and impulse in one whose outstanding characteristic was the unique goodness portrayed. It is often said that the disciples' belief that Jesus was Messiah depended upon the miracle of the resurrection. But whatever we may think of this statement, two things must be borne in mind. His disciples had already acknowledged him as Messiah before his death, and this

earlier acknowledgment was made by the men who had lived with him, while others who had only seen his healings made no such acknowledgment. And without that sort of character preceding, belief in his resurrection and Messiahship could have led to nothing but superstition and fanaticism.

There are other considerations here. The picture is given as history, and if it was not believed to be history by its writers, then, considering the detail given, there was intent to deceive. But it is not easy to think that a pious fraud would elaborate a portrait of one whose goodness was so instinct with honesty. It is still harder to think why, if it was a fraud at all, the fraud did not go further.

Sometimes it is suggested that part of the circumstantiality goes back to fact—that there was a real Jew named Jesus, brought up at Nazareth, frequenting Capernaum, wandering as a teacher over Galilee, and ultimately crucified at Jerusalem, but that the teaching and character portrayed in the Gospels were the product of the idealizing mind of the early Church fathered upon him. The suggestion reminds one of the story that Emerson once found a large, unshapely building being built in a country town. He asked who was the architect and was told by the builder that there was none : he himself was going to be responsible until the rough of the work was done, and then a man was coming down from Boston to put in the architecture. It is as absurd to think that an effective and life-like picture of supreme goodness can be produced by pasting maxims and notions of conduct upon incidents and circumstances of a life in which that goodness was not creative.

Goodness is life of a certain concrete sort expressing and realizing itself in response to actual eventualities. All terms for it depend upon experience for their content. This is especially clear in the religious connection which we have been considering. To say " This man was sinless, or perfect, and God is like him ", leaves us in much the position as to say " God is good ". But when a man in the first pangs of crucifixion prays for his executioners, it adds something to the world's experience of goodness, and therefore to the sort of character God is believed to have.

It is very important here to note that, since goodness is a product of life, an imaginary picture of goodness beyond known achievement is always lifeless. Negatives and superlatives only betray lack of vital pigment. Ideal characters in poetry or fiction never have vitality enough to convince us that in them life shows its true perfection ; in fact, we do not find the greatest depictees of character attempting the perfect man or woman. This characteristic of goodness is seen more strikingly when we consider the course of the race's ethical development.

The most marked advances in goodness come, not as more of what is already recognized as good, but as the appearance of a new sort of goodness. They are like the " emergences " which are now being recognized in other reaches of human evolution : when they have arrived a study of them evinces the connection and unity of direction with the past, but before their arrival we cannot predict them. Imagination can no more give us a convincingly living picture of a height of goodness not yet achieved than of an animal not yet evolved.

A concomitant of this is that, when there appears in

the world a sort of goodness subsequently recognized and received as an advance upon what preceded it, we almost invariably find that at its appearance it was not recognized as good and was rather condemned and persecuted as evil, and had by patient and painful persistence to win recognition, apparently through appeal thus made to something in its contemporaries of which they themselves were not yet aware. Of all the world's great leaders in goodness their contemporaries said : " When we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men."

In some cases this seems almost inevitable. Consider, for instance, the appearance of moral courage in the world. It was preceded by courage to face danger : we connect the two, and look upon the one as a higher development of the other. Yet the men to whom moral courage was still a stranger could not get at it by any extension of the courage they knew. The courage they knew was so admirable and so closely bound up with desire for the admiration of their fellows, that they could not imagine a courage that should abide shame. It had to come as a fact before the world recognized it as good : it was at first, and in many cases is still found to be, hard to recognize as a virtue and apt to be ill used by those who especially admire physical courage.

A feature of moral advance well recognized by students of ethics is the extension to a wider social circle of beneficial conduct hitherto regarded as obligatory only within a smaller circle. The man who does this is apt to earn the suspicion and anger of the narrower circle, with whose privileges he seems to be playing fast and loose. He is decried and persecuted until his spirit

evokes its triumph in his critics. In almost every age and country those who make the first move to free the slave or educate the poor are regarded as renegades by their fellow members of the privileged classes.

These considerations have special application to the question whether achieved human goodness lay behind the Gospel picture of the goodness of Jesus. Many are so used to that picture, not only by long familiarity and formal acceptance of its goodness, but by its great hold over the imagination, reinforced by the frequent portrayal of him in literature and art, that they fail to recognize the impossibility that the Gospel account of his goodness should be a work of individual or corporate imagination. Yet even with the Gospel portrait before them, the imaginative reconstructions of his life with which the public have in recent years been so abundantly supplied prove to be little else than more or less well-meant caricatures.

When we go back to the days of Jesus, we see at once that his goodness was not the imaginable extension of any accepted ideal of his day. The highest ideal of the Gentile world was the Stoic, and the Stoic would have disapproved of a man's allowing himself to be as perturbed by others as was Jesus when he wept over Jerusalem, while the "sorrow unto death" of Gethsemane would have confirmed his conclusion that this man was either weak or misled. The Jewish ideal of Jesus' day was the Pharisee—"as touching the law blameless"—and there is little doubt that never before in any race had so high an ideal of goodness been so generally and so seriously accepted and pursued. They had their ideal of a perfect Jew better than any real Jew, but when the really better

Jew appeared they acquiesced in his crucifixion because he was so unlike their imagined ideal. Christendom, long accustomed to the story of Jesus, unthinkingly accepts his outgoing, redemptive love as the highest goodness, but by ceasing to regard Jesus as a man, it largely escapes the application of his measure to its own conduct. But the men, especially the religious leaders, of Jesus' day could not so avoid it: there was neither theology nor long familiarity to shield them. The impact of a goodness higher than their own forced them to the choice of either following its lead or rejecting and opposing it. But to strike at goodness is to give it point, and the death of Jesus effectively empowered his followers against his opponents. The rejection of Jesus and his death by crucifixion, the very event that made his goodness most effective, is the best evidence that, far from being able to invent such goodness, the Jewish world of his day was most reluctant to recognize it, even his nearest followers leaving him at the last alone.

With these considerations in view, we find that the effect of modern criticism of the Gospels is rather to increase than diminish their service to faith. For, on the whole, it may undoubtedly be said that, whatever the effect of modern methods of historic criticism on the miraculous elements of the record, its work, by distinguishing the more from the less authentic, leaves the picture of Jesus' achieved goodness the more vivid, convincing, and commanding. This is exemplified in the generally agreed conclusion of modern New Testament scholarship that as a history of fact and as a record of words of Jesus, the Fourth Gospel is not equal to the other three, its record of both events

and utterances being influenced rather by the theological and religious interests of the author and of the Church of his day than by the desire to give an exact account of what was done and said by Jesus. And it is observable that just so far as the Fourth Gospel is more than a simple record of the acts and words of Jesus, just so far as in it history has been made subordinate to the theology and religious interests of the author, just to that extent the goodness of Jesus there depicted is of a lower and less rare quality than that which we see in the earlier Gospels, and this is all the more striking because of the unequalled power and beauty with which it gives expression to other aspects of Christian experience. In the Fourth Gospel there is no eating and drinking with publicans and sinners, no seeking of the lost, no weeping over Jerusalem. In the Sermon on the Mount we are told that God's children are known in loving their enemies : in the Fourth Gospel Jesus is reported to have said (xiii, 35) that his disciples were to be known by loving one another. " Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends " (John xv, 13) does not agree with the statement of the Sermon on the Mount that love for enemies is a better and greater thing than to " love them that love you ". The Fourth Gospel is willing to attribute to Jesus the old sort of love, love of friends, in the highest degree, but does not recognize (rather, as we have seen, denies) the new and higher love—the love of enemies—which according to the other Gospels Jesus taught and showed. With this accords the cold acerbity ascribed in the Fourth Gospel to his utterances to the Jews—" Ye are of your father the devil " (viii, 44), " How is

it that I even speak to you at all ? ” (viii, 25, marginal reading, R.V.).

In the first three Gospels there are apparently certain legendary accretions, like the cursing of the fig-tree : there is enhancement of the miraculous element (as may be seen by comparing what the First and Third Gospels take over from the Second, e.g. compare the “ all that were sick ” of Matt. viii, 16, and the “ every one ” of Luke iv, 40, with the “ many ” of Mark i, 34) : sayings are reported in various forms and there is doubt as to which is the most authentic : certain utterances are attributed to Jesus which can hardly have been his, as in Matt. xxiii, 3, where he is said to have enjoined complete obedience to scribes and Pharisees, despite the fact that his story is full of instances to the contrary, as in Mark ii, 23—iii, 6 ; vii, 1—15, etc. But I have in no case found that these removals diminish the goodness portrayed, while in many cases they leave it the clearer and more coherent.

In thus considering the reliability of the Gospel record, we see that here, as in certain other cases, the credibility of the witness is affected by the nature of his evidence. If, fifty years ago, I had gone to the Lake District seeking reminiscences of Wordsworth, and had been told by a yokel that Wordsworth had visited his father and had written on the fly-leaf of a book, now lost, certain lines of poetry, and if the yokel had repeated those lines and they had proved to be of the true Wordsworthian genius, beyond the compass of any other known poet of that time, it is clear that the peculiar nature of this piece of evidence would place it beyond the possibility of reasonable doubt, and would add to the credibility of

whatever else the yokel might say about the poet. In the same way the life-like representation of a character of uniquely high goodness, being incapable of creation as a work of imagination, not only speaks for its own credibility as evidence, but commends the good faith and general trustworthiness of these evangelists where they might possibly have allowed their imaginations to play. And here it is well to remember that most of the miracle stories of the Gospels are very sober compared with what may be found in later Christian or other religious records.

These considerations also have some bearing upon the question as to why Jesus left nothing in writing. Some say that it was because he believed, like many of his contemporaries, that the end of the world was coming very soon. When we ask how we know of this contemporary belief, we find that the knowledge depends upon the writings of people who wrote just because they believed the end of the world was coming very soon, and the argument is thus disowned by its grounds. One reason that withheld Jesus from writing was probably that he found the worship of the letter keeping men from his truth. Besides, he could have written down only his teaching, which his followers would have given precedence over their knowledge of his life and death, whereas his words depended on his life and especially on his death for their content and power. His supreme concern was to bring to men a new sort of goodness, a goodness intense, generous, self-giving enough to overcome evil, the goodness of a love so complete that it could not express itself thrivingly without the comment and warrant of his death. If this

goodness should effect its intent in the hearts of his fellows, then it would secure its own adequate record. If it did not, no written record of teaching would do what the impress of his life, driven home by his death, failed to do. It would seem that the gospel of Jesus was not merely his spoken truth of God, but rather his truth of God as enabled by his life and death to live in the hearts of his fellow-men. So that there is positive significance in the second-hand nature of the record.

To sum up, our very recognition that the goodness we see depicted in the central figure of the first three Gospels is real and supreme and convincingly life-like goodness, carries with it the affirmation that such goodness is possible in the universe; and although this affirmation is enough to make explicit the faith implied in our moral activity, yet the very nature of goodness tells us that the only way of accounting for the portrait is to conclude that it reflects actually achieved goodness, and the admitted facts of early Christianity give very strong evidence that the achiever of this goodness was Jesus of Nazareth.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER II

NOTE ON THE MIRACLES IN THE GOSPELS

It is not directly germane to the subject, but it will probably be helpful, to review the outstanding considerations on the miraculous elements in the Gospels. They fall into three classes: (1) The casting out of evil spirits, (2) Other healings, and (3) The so-called nature miracles, as the walking on the sea, the withering of the fig-tree, etc. The miraculous connected with the accounts of the birth and resurrection are treated elsewhere (pp. 109 ff. and 192 ff.).

Our two earliest and most reliable records are Mark and the document (commonly known as "Q") which both Matthew and Luke used besides using Mark.

"Q" consists mostly of teaching. It recounts two healings only, that of the palsied servant of the centurion at Capernaum, and that of a dumb man possessed with a devil. It makes no reference to any "nature miracle". To the messengers from the Baptist, however, we are told that Jesus said: "Go your way and tell John the things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached unto them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall find none occasion of stumbling in me" (Matt. xi, 4-6; Luke vii, 22, 23). There is much here to suggest that the details from "the blind receive" to "good tidings preached unto them" are an explanation that did not belong to the original words of Jesus. It is not usual to tell witnesses what the nature of their evidence must be. Had they seen these overwhelming miracles, why add a blessing to him who finds no occasion of stumbling in Jesus? And had "Q" in its original form contained this explicit reference

to particular miracles, it is very unlikely that it would have contained no instances of them. This explanatory clause has no reference to the casting out of demons, though in this act especially Jesus saw evidence of divine power (Matt. xii, 28 ; Luke xi, 20), and if he made any appeal to his works, he is very unlikely to have omitted this one ; but the entire absence of exorcisms from the Fourth Gospel shows a tendency in the Church to undervalue the part they played in the work of Jesus. So that this explanatory clause seems to have been part neither of the original words of Jesus nor even of the original form of " Q ", but to have been interpolated some time before Matthew and Luke used this document.

Later in " Q " (Matt. xii, 24 ; Luke xi, 15) we have the calumny : " This man doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils." It is clear that such a calumny would be too obviously pointless to be made if Jesus was well known as a healer of the blind and deaf, the dumb and the lame, and as a raiser of the dead. A reference to such achievements would have provided a crushing retort ; but Jesus does not make it, though his three several rejoinders show how important to him was the refutation of the calumny. This suggests very strongly that Jesus was well known as an exorcizer of evil spirits, but was not well known as healer of other diseases.

This conclusion is confirmed by Mark, where we find a distinct difference in the attitude of Jesus towards cases of possession and towards other cures. In the case of other cures we are told (i, 44 ; v, 43 ; vii, 36 ; viii, 26) that he enjoined secrecy, which means that he did not wish to be known as worker of such cures, the reason evidently being that the desire for cures impeded his preaching (i, 38 ; iii, 9). We also find evidences of unwillingness in the case of cures other than exorcism : he needs to be besought to effect them, and he does not rebuke the leper who urges " If thou wilt " (i, 40 ; v, 23 ; vii, 32 ; viii, 22). As the story proceeds cures diminish, so that after the lunatic boy in chap. ix we have only blind Bartimaeus. There is thus

evidence that the prominence given in the Gospel narratives to cures wrought by Jesus (other than exorcisms) was not apparent to his contemporaries and does not represent the historic proportion.

With regard to the nature miracles in Mark, the fig-tree incident is made questionable by the evangelist's extraordinary intimation that Jesus expected what he had no right to expect, "for it was not the season of figs." He makes Jesus use it to enforce a saying (xi, 23) which, in what is probably a more authentic, because a more original, form (Luke xvii, 6), runs, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye would say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou rooted up, and be thou planted in the sea; and it would have obeyed you"; and it is not unlikely that the difficulty of this paradox led to the transformation of the saying into a miracle.

In Mark vi we have the miraculous feeding of the five thousand and the walking on the water, but there is an undeniable element of sophistication in the narrator, who (v, 51 f.) blames the disciples for being amazed at the latter miracle. In Mark viii, 1-10, we have what is now generally accepted as a variant account of the same occurrences, since, apart from other considerations, it is inconceivable that on a similar occasion soon after the disciples should ask: "Whence shall one be able to fill these men with bread here in a desert place?" Here the story of the feeding and of the return by boat is told without any hint of the miraculous. The multitude, having been three days in the desert (viii, 2), must have come provisioned, and they would not all have run short at once, while Jesus' command to the disciples to hand out their reserves would evoke like action in others. It is probable also that Mark iv, 35-41, is a variant account of vi, 45-52. A journey at the end of the day would most likely be to the home side of the lake: that there were other boats making the same journey tells the same tale (cf. John vi, 23, 24). And in this account, since Jesus often spoke ironically and since the storms of the sea of Galilee were notorious for the rapidity of their rise and subsidence, a miracle is not necessarily

involved, though the disciples believed it to be one: all that we are told as to fact is that after he spoke the wind fell. And if the account of chap. vi is an account of the same incident, we see in it the usual effect of tradition in heightening the miraculous.

We have seen that both Matthew and Luke, in what they take over from Mark, enhance the miraculous. In addition to their turning the "many" of Mark i, 34, into "all", we may compare Matt. iv, 23 with Mark i, 39, Matt. xv, 29-31 with Mark vii, 31 ff., and note that both Matthew and Luke tell us that the daughter of Jairus was actually dead, whereas Mark leaves the question open, except for Jesus' own words: "The child is not dead but sleeps." Then we have Matthew's curious duplications, two maniacs at Gadara and two blind men at Jericho.

Two markedly miraculous incidents peculiar to Luke have their own difficulties. The account of the cure of the ten lepers (xvii, 11-19) implies that Jesus accused nine of ingratitude because, unlike the one that returned, they obeyed his injunction to go and show themselves to the priests. In the story of the raising from the dead of the son of the widow of Nain (vii, 11-16), we are told that Jesus worked the miracle unasked and before a great crowd at a time when, according to Mark, he was avoiding publicity as a healer and acting as such only when besought.

The author of Luke is also the author of Acts in which we are told that both Peter and Paul brought the dead to life again, and that cures were wrought by Peter's shadow and kerchiefs or aprons which Paul had worn. There are certain sections of Acts written in the first person and presumably extracts from a diary, and it is informing to compare the miraculous element in them with what we have in other parts of the book, for we note here a strong tendency to interpret events miraculously where miracle is not necessarily involved, as in the case of the lad at Troas (cf. also xxvii, 24 and 31), while otherwise the miraculous element is less marked than elsewhere in Acts.

The Fourth Gospel has no mention of exorcisms, but

gives a series of superlative miracles. In Mark the healings of Jesus are works of compassion and not signs: in John they are signs and not works of compassion. Two of the Johannine miracles call for special notice, the turning of the water into wine and the raising of Lazarus. In connection with the former, we are told that Jesus supplied over a hundred gallons of wine to a company of people who, it is implied, "had drunk freely" (the word elsewhere in the New Testament means simply "were intoxicated"), which alone is enough to show us that we are in the region of traditional or symbolic modification of fact. In the Fourth Gospel the raising of Lazarus takes the place occupied in Mark by the cleansing of the Temple as the immediate cause of the high priests' determination to kill Jesus. This difference is connected with another: in the first three Gospels the work of Jesus is to bring men by repentance back to God: the Fourth Gospel makes no mention of repentance—the work of Jesus is to give eternal life to those whom God gives to him, and he is therefore depicted as being put to death for giving life, the immediate cause of the priestly decision being the potency of this greatest of all his signs: "If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him" (xi, 48). The view of miracles as signs is another acute issue between the Fourth Gospel and the other Three, and in the story of the raising of Lazarus we have a contradiction and probably a correction of the saying in which the parable of the rich man and Lazarus culminates: "Neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead" (Luke xvi, 31). This saying also connects the parable with Jesus' refusal of the request for a sign (Mark viii, 12), while in the Johannine story we are expressly told that Jesus' motive was to evoke faith (xi, 15, 42), and are given to understand that for this reason he waits until his friend is dead before taking action.

It would seem therefore that, in those who were responsible for the Gospel narratives, we have to allow for a considerable tendency towards enhancing the miraculous and towards seeing its presence where it was not necessarily involved.

But many considerations give us reason to conclude that the Gospel interest in miracles was not so much the physically marvellous as their aptness in symbolic and pictorial representation of the spiritual power of Jesus as experienced in the Church. This interest, more than sheer love of marvel, was probably the main cause of the emphasis and enhancement of the miraculous in the story, and would account for its generally sober nature; and it is notable that hardly a miracle is recorded that does not lend itself obviously to this use.

Making all allowance for these various influences and for the popular and primitive nature of the diagnosis employed, we are left with a solid substratum of history in the narratives of healing and exorcism. For the significance of this historic substratum we have no better indication than the letters of Paul, which are direct testimony of what he knew at first hand, and to him (1 Cor. xii, 28) miracles and gifts of healing were a recognized part of the Church's activities, one of the many powers of the Spirit of God working through man. And it is to be expected that Jesus would possess these powers in a supreme degree. Our consideration of the miraculous in the Gospels thus brings us into precise accord with the account which, we are told (Acts x, 38), Peter gave of Jesus, "how that God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."

CHAPTER III

GOD AND MAN

(I)

A FAITH held as a conscious possession must find its bearings with regard to the rest of our experience. Our faith itself sets us to this task, but does not depend on our ability to do it to our complete satisfaction. The task is difficult, for when we get even a step away from the native affirmations of our spiritual life, we are very open to error, our faith being seldom simple and strong enough to detect and reject the counterfeits and substitutes of the religious market. And then, too, our understanding of our non-religious experience is itself by no means complete, so that our theology can be little more than a tentative sketch-map showing the whereabouts of our faith with regard to the rest of our experience.

Whatever may be our opinion of the worth of Christian theology, the fact is significant that no other figure or event of history has ever been the occasion of anything approaching the intense and long-continued theological thinking that has had its incentive in Jesus. No man seems able to think seriously of Jesus without theologizing: traces of it are found in the simplest Gospel records, and there is truth in the statement that the records were made because Jesus was theologically

significant to those who made them. This, of course, all witnesses to the experience that he is of unique and revolutionary significance as to the meaning of the universe, and especially as to the meaning and place of human personality in a universe which has its ultimate reality in God. Men felt that they could not do justice to their religious experience of Jesus except by expressing it in the highest terms afforded by their customary thought of God and man, but these terms were inevitably inadequate, having come from a religious level which Jesus had transcended. Men could not bring themselves, as they felt bound to do, under the authority of his spirit, without applying to him and his truth terms which were inadequate and to some extent distorting. Their theologizing of Jesus was in part a "rationalization", a conscious justification, for a recognition and welcome of him evoked from all the elements of their being, i.e. from a base wider than their conscious thought allowed for. Hence the results of the Church's theologizing are always being modified by a more direct and simpler application of the teaching and spirit of Jesus to the ideas of God and man by which it interprets him. So that Christian theology is essentially a developing process.

The two great questions that have all along exercised Christian thought are (1) the problem of the person of Jesus—"How are we to think of him in his human and divine relations?" and (2) the problem of his work—"How are we to think of what he effects for us in his life and in his death?" It is clear that the two are inextricably bound up with each other, and also that we cannot answer either without first asking, "What are

we to think of man in his relation to God?" And, as we might expect from the considerations just reviewed, the most fruitful source of trouble in thinking both of the person and work of Jesus has been that theologians have been confident that, without reference to him, they could assess adequately the essential relations between God and man, and could then apply their findings to the elucidation of Jesus' relation to God and of his work for man. Whereas it is clear that if we are to see Jesus truly in his relation to God and man, we must begin with what we learn in him of the relation of God to man and man to God.

(2)

One of the most marked things about man is the absoluteness of authority with which duty speaks in him. We are not sure of every detail, but we are quite sure of an absolutely authoritative command to think truly and to act kindly and justly. Now that which commands us absolutely speaks for our whole universe, i.e. is to us the will of God, and therefore the expression of his nature. But nothing can command us absolutely except that which bids us do what our whole being consents to as its own true expression of itself. So that we have in the moral imperative a concurrent expression of the nature of God and of our own true nature. And the concurrence is not accidental: it is essential to the truly moral nature of the activity. But this implies a kinship, a fundamental oneness between my being and God's, otherwise his being and mine could not

seek satisfactory moral expression in one and the same act.

Every endeavour to relate our moral life to reality must either end in surrendering all that is characteristic of moral life, together with all serious use of the word "ought", or it must affirm the fatherhood of God. Unless the word "ought" has its ground in my relation to the universe, it ceases to be itself, losing its quality of command. But it cannot be grounded in my relation to the universe unless the universe itself has a will to righteousness, and the coincidence of the universe's "ought" with my "ought", being more than mere coincidence, tells me that I was produced in order that the fundamental oneness of myself and the universe that produced me might be evident in my highest activity. What is this but to affirm God and my kinship to him? So too with purpose. If a man is convinced that the universe is purposeless or that its purpose is unknowable, then the use of purpose in his life is limited to serving the ends of this or that instinct or impulse. But the highest use of purpose is in the unifying of all life's activities, which otherwise bring ennui or inward conflict. And the question, "What is to be the purpose of my life?" cannot be answered convincingly and commandingly if we are convinced that our answer has no ground in life itself or in the universe that produced life. But if there is a good purpose in the universe that produced purposeful life in man in order that its purpose and his should find their fulfilment in each other, again what is this but to say that God is man's father seeking creative fellowship with him as his greatest gift to his child?

We saw in the first chapter the vital part that Jesus has in giving us explicit possession of the affirmations implied in our personal activities. We can now see that the conclusion drawn from these affirmations finds confirmation in his teaching, one of the most frequent and formative themes of which is the universal and essential fatherhood of God. It is sometimes maintained that according to the teaching of Jesus, followed in this by Paul, God was always kind as a father to all men, but that he does not become their father nor they his sons until they turn to him in repentance, faith, and obedience. It is, of course, clear enough that Paul's letters say that when men believe in Christ they are made sons of God by adoption. The figure is simple, very much simpler apparently than Paul's thought, for though he says in Rom. viii, 14-17, "As many as are led by the Spirit, these are sons of God . . . Ye have received the Spirit of adoption . . . We are children of God," yet in viii, 23, he speaks of "waiting for our adoption, the redemption of the body", and in ix, 4, speaking of unbelieving Jews he says, "Whose is the adoption." But in any case, if his figure of adoption gives his profoundest thought of God's relation to man,¹ and if Paul here represents the thought of Jesus, then Jesus, the supreme master of figurative speech, is misleading and inferior to Paul in the figure used to

¹ If the Epistle to the Ephesians represents Paul's thought, he believed in "one God and Father of all" (iv, 6), "from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named" (iii, 15). And since Eph. i, 5, speaks of God's "having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself", the word "adoption" seems to be used here not to deny that God is Father of all, but to stress the element of divine will both in the original relation and in the means whereby we are brought into conscious enjoyment of it.

describe the most important of truths. Nor is it a question of figures only. If we say that God is like a father, that is clear. If we say that God is the father of all men, that is clear—though it means something more. But if we must not call a man a child of God till he turns to God in repentance and obedience, what do we add by calling him so? We presuppose that God always has been kind as a father to the man, and now the man's repentance gives this fatherly goodwill its full opportunity, so that to say that the man now becomes God's son and God his father is either an honorific fiction or an otiose figure for God's active benefaction. He who has been only like a father to me can never become my father except figuratively or fictitiously. A man may conceivably be made something other than he was: he cannot be born again except by conscious appropriation of the deeper truth of his first coming to being. Jesus' greatest picture of the sinner turning to God is of the son who comes back to his father. The whole story turns on a fatherhood, which, far from depending on any change in the prodigal, is the power that effects the change. And this that the parable suggests is corroborated by everything in Jesus' teaching (so far as the first three Gospels are concerned) that gives any indication of his meaning. "Else ye have no reward with your Father" (Matt. vi, 1), "Neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matt. vi, 15), speak of God as Father of those who have by their action put themselves beyond his reward and forgiveness. Had Jesus thought of God's fatherhood as conditional, he surely would have said that the hypocrites and unforgiving must not reckon themselves as God's children.

If, against all likelihood, it is insisted that Jesus here was speaking only to his chosen disciples, yet, even so, Judas was amongst them. In Matt. xxiii, 1, 9, we are told that Jesus, speaking "to the multitudes and to his disciples", said: "Call no man your father on earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven." The objection is justified that the setting is probably due to the evangelist, but, in any case, it is evidence that the evangelist did not believe that Jesus limited the Fatherhood of God to his followers. If we take the saying by itself, the suggestion is strong that it refers not to the harmless use of the term "father" for any old and honoured man, but to such a use as the Baptist rebukes, "Say not within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father," in which case it would be an affirmation of the universal fatherhood of God as indubitable as Luke's "Adam, the son of God" (iii, 38). In any case the argument from the fatherhood of God to human obligation, and especially to the true use of words in calling God "Father", suggests that to Jesus God's fatherhood was to be reckoned as the spiritual and factual basis of human action and not as its reward or result. And, so interpreted, this saying is in line with the more celebrated one: "Love your enemies . . . that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. v, 44, 45; Luke vi, 35), where the argument is based on the declaration of a kinship between God and man, so that only by using the magnanimity that he uses can they realize their native dignity of being. It is the command to be in act what we are by birth, like Henry V's exhortation to valour—

“ Now attest

That those whom you called fathers did beget you.”

If there is no kinship, the reference to God would suggest and support the excuse : “ God may act so, but it is too high for us.” Clearer still is : “ If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good gifts (or the Holy Spirit) to them that ask him ? ” (Matt. vii, 11 ; Luke xi, 13). Jesus here speaks of God as Father of those whom he calls evil, and it should be noted that those whom he calls so are not those the effect of whose prayer he is speaking of—he turns from “ ye, being evil ” to “ they that ask him ”. And if “ your Father ” means no more than “ a good God ”, the argument is destroyed, for it would then argue from human evil to divine goodness, instead of arguing, as it does, from human to divine fatherhood. So that the implication which lies at the root of our moral activity becomes explicit in one of the central themes of Jesus’ teaching.

The fact of sin makes some theologians fear that the assertion of the kinship of man and God infringes the divine majesty. But the only law which can, or ought to, command us absolutely is the law of our own being, and this can be also the will of God only by expressing his nature also, which implies kinship between us and him ; so that without this kinship his majesty must lose the only absoluteness which it can have for moral beings, and sin must lose its absolute vileness. To call the Infinite “ Father ” may seem to be masking the awfulness of God, especially to theologians who in their

private capacity are facing to-day's problems of family discipline, but in reality it adds the one thing needful to complete the greatness of creatorship and almightiness—absolute moral authority, not to be had on any other terms. It is a true spiritual sagacity that teaches us to adore "the Father of an infinite majesty".

(3)

The conclusions of the last section are confirmed when we think of the Creator in the character in which Jesus, by word, by life, and by death, taught us to know him. If the unreserved urgency with which Jesus spent himself in seeking the good of men speaks truly of the character of his Father, then beyond all things God desires the love and fellowship of men, and therefore, in the making of man, God will himself be to the utmost possible in man. The only limit of his entry into humanity will be that he will give man such independence as is needed for a personality free enough to love and be loved. And this very freedom, which involves the power to transgress God's will, can hardly be thought of except as an especially costly sort of self-giving on the part of God, involving an especial self-limitation.

The best term available for a Creator who imparts himself to his creatures is "Father". And this reminds us that it is flippant to think of the creation of the universe as a small thing with God. We charge God with immorality, if we suppose him to create a universe that produces moral beings and not to be himself to the utmost of his powers in that universe. But if we think of creation as an activity into which God puts

himself and his powers to the utmost, then we shall expect and welcome its overwhelming bigness, which otherwise is oppressive and makes us wonder whether we are not too small for God to care for us.

And again, if God in creating was moved by such self-giving as Jesus shows in redeeming man, then the work of God in creating must reflect the moral necessities of his being. God could no more refrain from creating and still be the God he is, than Jesus could have shunned the cross without being untrue to himself. And the recognition of this helps a point in our thinking. For it has often been remarked, that if God is necessary to account for the universe, he does not account for it unless it is necessary to him. You cannot pass with logical cogency from the world to God, unless you can pass with equal cogency from God to the world. And there is practical value here ; for the belief that God made the world does not conduce to piety of thought or act unless there comes with it an intimation as to why he made it and an assurance that he is in the world he made to the height of its capacity.

(4)

The notion of creation by act of will has difficulties which did not appear acutely so long as it was held that creation took place by six quickly successive and immediately effective flats. But scientific observation now compels the conclusion that whatever be the ultimate explanation, the still active process of creation has been of a length that appals the mind. If it is to be

attributed to a divine will, then it is a divine will working under conditions. The very term "divine purpose" acknowledges this, for a purpose is the will seeking through a series of sequent activities what cannot be had immediately for the mere willing of it.

But if the divine will is conditioned, by what is it conditioned? The only possible answer is that the divine will is conditioned by the divine nature: at least, this is the only answer possible to anyone whose sureness of God is found in the absoluteness of the moral imperative, for the ground of an absolute obligation cannot be found in one half of a dualistic universe. Also it must be remembered that pure will (if there can be such a thing) is not moral will, the good will being that which both fulfils, and is conditioned by, the nature of the being who wills.

This leads to the further conclusion that we must think of that which God creates as having its being in God, as being itself of his very being. As we have seen, the absolute authoritativeness of the right implies that God and man are of the same being, since one and the same good act expresses the true nature of both. But if I am of the divine being, then the evolutionary process which produced me, and from which I draw my being, is itself of the same quality and being; for it must be remembered that the ethical imperative speaks to and of man as a whole, body and mind.

The same conclusion is suggested by the evolutionary process itself, if we bring God into any connection with it. When the act of creation was relegated to "the beginning" and was thought to be quite different from the observable processes of life, it was not hard to think

of God as creating the world out of nothing, a useful figure being found in the magician's power of bringing things into being at a word. But the doctrine of evolution makes us see God working to the utmost all the time, bringing the new to being by working upon what is already in existence. Are we to suppose that "in the beginning" he did otherwise? If not, then the universe is part of himself. It is not only an act of will, but an outgoing of his own being. The greatest Hebrew minds spoke in this strain. "If he cause his heart to return unto himself, if he gather unto himself his spirit and breath, all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto the dust" (Job xxxiv, 14, 15, R.V. margin). "In him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts xvii, 28).

If we think that God created the world merely by a motion of his will, the problems of pain and evil are made much more difficult; for if God in creating was not working under conditions, we have to suppose that he allowed pain and the possibility of evil, when his ends could, had he so willed it, been as well achieved without them. If, on the other hand, we see the will of God working under conditions, it is not hard to think that the good he seeks can be had only at the price of pain and risk of evil, since all higher life seems necessarily subject to pain, and since freedom to appropriate good involves freedom to yield to evil.

And if creation is not merely by divine will, but by the outgoing of the divine being, then it is an act of self-giving, the end of which is the production of beings who are capable of consciously receiving the gift, and to whom therefore God can give himself more fully,

and so fulfil himself in his children. And if so, then, since pain seems essential to conscious life, is it not possible to regard it as the inevitable counterpart and signature in the gift of the cost to the giver ?

Our sureness that the Spirit of God speaks within us, but is not always obeyed, implies that the creative activity that produced us involves some sort of division or strain between God's power and his good will. And yet the very idea of right implies that the fundamental reality is the supremely good God. We have therefore to conclude that what as a whole is sought by God's good will involves the possibility of contravening it in parts. God cannot have what he loves most without having much that he hates—and it is difficult to think how the deepest love could otherwise find measure and expression for itself. An infinite goodness cannot keep all good to itself, and must therefore will finite wills to come into being and to co-operate with itself, and this involves the possibility of its being disobeyed ; so that the divine good will cannot fulfil itself without what can only be called self-limitation. Indeed, all the activities of a sense of value involve self-limitation in the setting aside of certain desirable things for the sake of those we desire more : if we could have everything we desired, we should never say " I prefer this to that " : life would have appetites but no values, still less any supreme values. And yet it is by the pursuit of values that we realize ourselves. So that from the analogy of our own best life we are impelled to think that in creation the good will of God, the outgoing of himself in creativeness, his self-limitation and self-realization, are but

different aspects and essential elements of the one activity.

Some such view as is taken here seems needful if we are to weigh truly the seriousness of sin. Sin, no doubt, is treachery to my own nature, but what does it matter to God? Since in the moral imperative the law of my own nature speaks as the will of God, then unless my sin matters as much to God as it does to me, the moral aspect of wrong-doing is more serious than the religious. But if this world is the serious business of God, if behind his creative will is his nature, so that the universe is the outgoing of his very being, then my sin is a betrayal of his life no less than of my own. It is a refusal of the ends for which God gave me of his own being and a perversion of his costly gift to the thwarting of the goodness that gave.

It is from this point that we can perhaps best consider a question that is sometimes raised as to how, if the possibility of sin is an inevitable concomitant to freedom, and freedom is necessary to goodness, can we deny the possibility of sin to God, as theologians always do. We must bear in mind that, as we have seen, the freedom that cannot exist without the possibility of sin is the freedom of finite, dependent beings, a freedom necessary to their appropriation of a goodness that is not original with them but has its origin in God, a freedom by which they make their own his gift of spiritual being. Sin is the repudiation of faith in something greater and better than ourselves: it is the use of God-given power to defeat the intent of the divine initiative. In all these ways it is obvious that sin in any sense known to us is impossible to God.

But it may still be asked whether there is not in God's goodness and freedom something analogous to our possibility of sin, as otherwise his freedom may seem unreal to us. And there is certainly one element in our temptation that we must attribute to him—the felt costliness of good. He, however, has the counterpart of this in the costliness of the whole creative outgoing and especially in its culmination in beings capable of sin, that is, he has it in the costliness of all that makes him our God. So that if we may in any sense speak of God as being tempted, we can only think of him as being tempted not to be God (a sort of temptation not possible to us), and the very fact of our existence and of the possibility of our sinning is evidence that his one possibility of temptation has been put aside and that he has taken the costly way to the best—how costly we know in the suffering of Jesus.

(5)

If creation is viewed as the outgoing and self-giving of God, then the length and painfulness of the evolutionary process are fit exponents of the patience of the giver and the costliness of his work. And other results for thought will follow.

As we have seen, if God is to be brought into any connection with the evolutionary process, and if he is in creation what we know him to be in Jesus, then he is always in his world to the utmost of its capacity and willingness. This will affect our notions of miracle and providence.

If we are to think of creation in this way, the order of nature is the order of the being and will of God, and it is folly to think of proving his presence by a break in an order which is the order of his own consistency and faithfulness. Some events will undoubtedly be more significant of God than others, but they will be so, not because they break the order, but because they help us to see more deeply into it. And it must be remembered that the order of nature is not a mechanical order. Modern scientific thought acknowledges that the emergence of new forms of being, unpredictable from examination of their antecedents, such as life and mind, must be recognized as part, and a most important part, of nature's order ; and this is precisely what we should expect if nature is the continuous and consistent but increasingly effective activity of God.

Since God is always active to the utmost for his children's good, it does him less than justice to speak of " special providences ". There is also the very great danger that when we see a " special providence " in an event, it may lead us to attach God's approval to what is morally wrong. One of the murderers of Archbishop Sharp tells us that when they were out after another man and unexpectedly discovered the Archbishop's coach in sight, they said, " Truly, this is of God, and it seemeth that God hath delivered him into our hands ; . . . for all looked on it . . . as a clear call from God to fall upon him." And after the very brutal murder, the same narrator tells us : " They went to prayer, first together, and then each one alone, with great composure of spirit, and enlargement of heart more nor ordinary,

blessing the Lord, who had called them out and carried them so courageously thro' so great a work, and led them by his holy spirit in every step that they stept in that matter."¹ And in less dramatic ways, belief in "special providences" has led many men in business and many nations in war to regard success as evidence of God's approval of the action that led to it.

Another bad result of belief in "special providences" is that ill success or disaster is interpreted as an evidence of God's displeasure, which has not only led to endless uncharity and cruelty to the unfortunate, but robs the sufferer of the assurance of God's fellowship just when he most needs it. Whereas if God is always to the utmost in his world, then his love suffers with his world's pain, and we may know that when we suffer, whether we deserve it or not, we are paying with him the inevitable price of the good he seeks for us, and that he does not like our pain any more than we do. By so accepting it, we have a fellowship in the costliness of his love, in which, if we have been at fault, we find a pardon that is infinitely better than remission of penalty.

When we ask where we are to look for the evidence of God's activity in the life of the world, we need to remember that there are two ways in which to judge the moral quality of an act. The one is by a complete knowledge of its circumstances and results, and the other is by a knowledge of the spirit in which the agent acted. When we apply this to our estimate of God's goodness as deducible from the events of the world, we see that to attempt a judgment of his character from

¹ *Scottish Diaries and Memoirs*, 1550-1746, arranged and edited by J. G. Fyfe, M.A., pp. 311 ff.

any particular event is absurd, for we can never know more than the smallest fraction of its conditions and results: to judge truly in this way is a feat of omniscience. Also we see that, in proportion to the greatness of the worker, the work will be a connected whole, and therefore its goodness will be seen in the whole rather than in any particular part. A further complication is the element of freedom which we believe God gives his creatures in making them his children. So that our only way of judging the moral quality of God's activity in the events of the world is not in any external event but in the spirit which we know to be the right spirit of human activity, the spirit of truth, justice, and love. In activity inspired by this spirit we know we have divine co-operation, and we find here the one range of events in the world in which the moral quality of God's activity is surely and patently shown to us.

It seems only in this way that we can come to any satisfactory notion of God's activity in history. Two other possibilities find advocates. Some think that God impresses directions and powers from without upon men, a view almost universal in primitive religions and well represented in the Bible, especially in its earlier parts (cf. 1 Kings xxii, 19-23, where God is said to send a lying spirit to deceive Ahab's prophets, that they may decoy him to his death). But the difficult question arises, why, if God can achieve good in this way, his use of it is confined to certain moments in the lives of certain men. Must a man count himself useless to God if he has no such experiences? And also when such directions come, are they recognized by conscience as the right thing to do? If so, is it not really conscience

that directs? And if conscience does not recognize them as right, can the direction be good?

Others have thought that God guides history by more or less physical interference, by sending defeat or victory in battle, storms to wreck armadas, etc., which, of course, has the objections just considered in connection with "special providences". There is also the difficulty that on this basis providence on the whole would show itself to be on the side of the big battalions.

On the other hand, a good case can be made for the working in history of certain laws whose import is essentially moral. For instance, over and over again, the political collapse of a people has followed their moral decadence. Amiel quotes Tocqueville: "If a people will not believe, they cannot be free." When Bishop Creighton said, "History has always shown that the Gods dislike and punish a conceited nation," he seems to have something of this sort in mind, rather than divine initiative of interference. And this regular reaction of the universe to the moral quality of corporate life is an undoubted and very significant fact. But if this is the whole of God's activity in history, he is reduced to automatic reaction: the initiative is man's and God is merely the wall against which the ball bounces.

So that no adequate account can be given of God's working in history, unless we see it supremely in the co-operation of the divine will with the human will in all the highest personal activities. Of all events in the universe, only those in which the human will for good is concurrent with the divine can be described in the full sense as the will of God. It is there above all that God speaks and acts in human life.

(6)

We see now why our knowledge of God is through faith and not by deduction from observed facts. For creation being the self-giving of God, and his character having its expression in the gift and the giving of it, our knowledge of him must be by our most inward experience of the life he gives. And faith is precisely the affirmations vital to our most personal activities : it is what we affirm in and by the doing of our most personal acts. To say that these affirmations are implied rather than explicit is to say that our intensest personal activity proclaims them in unworded assertion (deeds speaking louder than words), and could not be carried on in simultaneous and whole-hearted denial of them.

Hence it comes that, when we seek to regard faith as a deduction from observed fact, it grows pale and unsteady. Observed facts and other incoming effects evoke our inward activity and so give content to its affirmations, but it is in the activity, not in the occasion, that we must look for the sureness of the affirmation and for its reference to God. These affirmations become a constant and explicit possession only when they find, as they do in the goodness of Jesus, an observed fact always available to the mind, and always, when thought of, evoking in us one sort or other of the activity in which the affirmations of faith are implied.

It is thus, because we are of God, that we can know him only by and in our own most inward activities, i.e. by faith. If God is our Father, our most important knowledge of him cannot come otherwise. The one great essential of a child's understanding of his father

is that he should possess and use the powers of human personality which his father has transmitted to him : here is the core of his knowledge, the interpreter of all that his father may do or say.

The distinction which we here find between knowledge of God that comes by faith and knowledge that comes by observed fact will help in the problem of the relation of ignorance to sin. We are sure that ignorance is always a condition of sin, yet we cannot reduce sin to ignorance, and we have difficulty in seeing how the line is to be drawn between the two. We assume, with considerable assurance, that a perfect knowledge of the effects of a wrong act would prevent us from doing it. Is it our ignorance therefore that is chiefly to blame for our wrong choice ? It would be, if all the factors that go to make a choice were observable facts or deductions from them ; but they are not. When we say that, if we saw all the results of a bad act, we should not do it, this statement is not deduction from observed fact : it is only another expression of the ethical faith that to do right is best for the doer and all concerned. And here we come upon the factor, to ignore which is to sin. As children of God we are finite beings with finite knowledge, and also by the same relationship we are beings with an inward sureness of the right spirit and with freedom to choose the right or wrong. The choice of wrong is the repudiation of the faith that is thus given in our very being ; and much culpable ignorance results directly or indirectly from wrong choice. But there is also a blameless ignorance inseparable from our constitution as intelligent but finite beings. If we remember that, without this ignorance, temptation would be

impossible, and that the possibility of temptation is a condition of the freedom of choice by which we make the good truly our own, then we see that this blameless ignorance from which we suffer is part of the price of the divine life which God imparts to us and shares with us.

If our acts could proceed from complete knowledge, i.e. if from observed fact or omniscient prevision we saw surely just how the right act would prove best for us, then the valour of righteousness and the heroism of self-sacrifice would be lost. Thus through the heroism and self-sacrifice, made possible by our ignorance, we can have an otherwise impossible fellowship with God in the cost of his creative self-giving and infinite sympathy, which in themselves are beyond our experience.

CHAPTER IV

JESUS

THE question as to how to think rightly of Jesus arises from our experience of his effect upon our faith. His achieved goodness not only makes explicit the faith implied in my personal activities and gives it to me as something to live by, but also gives it such content that it becomes a peace-giving and triumphant faith, the effective centre of my personal life. I find, too, that I need the fact of his goodness to keep this faith alive, or to keep me at the level where it is at home. I find that apart from my contemplation of Jesus, especially in his suffering, my faith that God's love is of the redeemingly costly sort begins to grow unsubstantial and that God's power over me is lessened.

Now the question is : What am I to think of this man without whom the truth of God becomes less than itself, and through whom alone God's kingship is effective in me ?

(I)

Traditional theology answers that Jesus was the incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity, which is commonly taken to mean that the life of Jesus was really a stage in the life of One who had hitherto had personal being as one person of the Triune God, and that his incarnation was a miraculous intrusion (by

a virgin birth) into the course of history. This view is that of the great Christian creeds, and is claimed to be founded on scripture.

But it must be considered that since the books of the New Testament were written and since the creeds were framed ideas on many things, human and divine, have changed: the result of increased knowledge and of a more thorough appropriation of the teaching of Jesus is that expressions and conclusions possible and necessary then are unnecessary and impossible to us. To instance one point, the statement that Jesus ascended into heaven was no doubt intended to be taken quite literally by Luke (xxiv, 51; Acts i, 11) and the Apostles' Creed. With the simple cosmology of a flat earth overarched by heaven, the dwelling-place of God, this is intelligible and significant. To us, with a globular earth floating in fathomless space, it becomes, as a statement of fact, unintelligible, and figuratively it suggests rather retreat into remoteness than the assumption of superintending sovereignty. In particular we need to remember the looser ideas of personality belonging to that time. It was an age capable of thinking that John the Baptist was the reincarnation of Elijah, and Jesus the reincarnation of John or of Elijah or Jeremiah, and to such an age the proposition that Jesus of Nazareth stood in personal continuity with the pre-existent and heavenly Son of God was not only easier of acceptance than to ours, but must have been different in meaning: personality was evidently not then thought of as it is by us.

We see also that on this matter the different books of the New Testament differ greatly.

It may be fairly said that the men in immediate contact with Jesus, through whom came in the first instance the information embodied in our most reliable records—the first three Gospels—betrayed in what they imparted no inkling that Jesus had pre-existed personally as the heavenly Son of God. Even the birth narratives (though generally now held to belong to the less primitive material of the First and Third Gospels) do not speak of the incarnation of an already existing person ; the Holy Spirit is spoken of as the generative principle by whom Mary conceives one that shall be, not one that already is. For the rest, so far as these oldest records go (i.e. the first three Gospels)—one of which came from one of the inmost circle of his intimates, Peter—there is nothing to suggest that Jesus ever said anything to lead them to think that he had pre-existed in heaven, much less that the belief that he had was of vital importance. This should be taken into account by those who maintain that Jesus loses all saving power unless we believe in his divine and personal pre-existence. His closest followers, as we read in the early chapters of Acts, preached remission of sins in his name without any reference to his pre-existence, and were themselves redeemed men effective in the redemption of others long before the time when we have any evidence of the emergence of this belief, which seems to have been the Church's rejoinder to speculations of a gnostic type.

It is difficult to ascertain what Paul thought on this matter. In two places he uses language which seems to speak of Jesus as having pre-existed as a divine being. In Phil. ii, 5-11, he speaks of the life and death

of Jesus as being an act of self-emptying on the part of one who was "in the form of God": in Col. i, 19, 20, his life and death are spoken of as the indwelling of the fullness of God in him, his death being (Col. ii, 15) described as a triumphant conflict over "the principalities and the powers", which were so very important a part of Paul's world. In this connection it is significant that Paul personifies things like sin and death so vividly that we are in doubt whether he did not regard them as quasi-personal powers. We need to remember also that he writes of the present Christ, the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of God without making any obvious distinction between them (cf. Rom. viii, 9-11), and there is no evidence that what he wrote about the pre-existent Christ was more definite: his most explicit utterance, "the rock that followed them was Christ" (1 Cor. x, 4), suggests that it was not. And with this must be reckoned that in his most formal and elaborate statement with regard to the coming of Christ (Rom. i, 1-7), he makes no reference to pre-existence but rather implies the contrary, as a literal translation makes clear: "... who came into being of David's seed according to the flesh and was designated Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection of the dead."¹

The evidence of Acts is important here. In ii, 22, Peter is reported to have spoken of "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and

¹ For Romans ix, 5, see alternative translation in R.V. margin. Elsewhere Paul tells us that he did not think of Jesus as God, e.g. 1 Cor. viii, 6: "There is one God, the Father . . . and one Lord, Jesus Christ . . ." (Cf. also Eph. iv, 5, 6; 1 Tim. ii, 5; 1 Cor. xv, 28.)

wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you . . .", and again in x, 38, "Jesus of Nazareth, how that God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power : who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil ; for God was with him." Peter was the authoritative representative of the earliest Church and was in both cases expounding the content of its faith. And if the author of Acts, as may be objected, was not likely to have had a record of what Peter said on these occasions, it is even more significant that one, writing when he did and acquainted with the work and thought of Paul and probably of the Church generally, should consider such descriptions of Jesus to represent the thought of the early Church as given by one who was not only its authoritative spokesman, but of all men had been most intimate with him of whom he spoke. It is also to be noted that Acts attributes to Paul a description of Jesus as "the man whom he (God) hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts xvii, 31), a description not only very like in substance to those attributed to Peter, but very like that which we find in Rom. i, 1-7.

In the Fourth Gospel only is Jesus said to have spoken of himself as having pre-existed—as being the Son of man from heaven (iii, 13 ; vi, 62 ; viii, 58 ; xvii, 5, etc.). But these statements occur in discourses which are generally now admitted to represent not so much the actual words of Jesus as the ideas and beliefs of the time in which the book was written (*circa* A.D. 90-100).¹

¹ In the Fourth Gospel we have evidence of more than one level of development in Christian thought : see e.g., p. 176.

For instance, the discourse said to have been given to the Jews in the synagogue at Capernaum (vi, 41-59) has undeniable reference to the Eucharist, and without recognition of that reference is unintelligible. And we have seen (p. 70) that this theological treatment of Jesus has its concomitant in a reduction of his moral altitude. Also in the Fourth Gospel Jesus is never tempted.

We must here consider the exclamation of Thomas, "My Lord and my God" (John xx, 28), which is usually cited as giving the highest point of Johannine Christology.¹ But there is doubt whether it is intended to do so. Apart from the uniqueness of this use of the term in the whole Johannine literature, it is given as the expression of a materialistic faith which depends on seeing and handling and is therefore rebuked by Jesus, "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed : blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." And the application of the term "God" to Jesus must not be considered apart from its special treatment in John x, 33-6—"The Jews answered him, For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy ; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods ? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came (and the scripture cannot be broken), say ye of him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest ; because I said, I am son of God ?" When therefore

¹ Our translation of John i, 1, "The word was God," says more than the Greek warrants, which is "The Logos was divine". Nor is it clear that the writer of this passage regarded the Logos as a personal being.

we are told that Jesus allowed himself to be called "My God" by Thomas, we have no right to take this use of the term apart from its definition and defence in John x, 34 f., where it means much less than we mean by "God". This is the position, whether we take the Fourth Gospel to be an exact record of the words of Jesus or not. That in the present case it is not so is evident, since Jesus would not call the Psalms "law" or speak to his fellow Jews of "your law". If we recognize that the Fourth Gospel, in what it attributes to Jesus, is often influenced by the needs and interests of the day in which it was written, the strangeness of Thomas's language, of Jesus' rebuke, and of the argument of x, 33-6, disappears. Asia Minor, where the Gospel was written, was a fervent centre of Cæsar worship, and those who were won to Christianity from this materialistic cult with its deification of past and present emperors would transfer to Christ the terms of their old worship; and this would give the Jews a new point of attack against Christianity, the charge of blasphemy in the use of the term "God", a charge which would touch Jewish Christians deeply. The author of the Fourth Gospel admits that the term is applied to Jesus, but finds it attached to a faith that is not of the purest and most spiritual sort; and he reminds the Jews that in their revered and inerrant scripture it is written that God called certain men "gods", and that therefore they have no ground for a charge of blasphemy in the application of the term to Jesus. It is to be noted that in xx, 17, Jesus speaks of "My Father and your Father, and my God and your God".

The belief in a pre-existent Christ, or a Son of man

who comes down from heaven, was not of Christian origin. In the Similtudes of Enoch, a pre-Christian Jewish apocalyptic work, the outstanding figure is "that Son of man", who is also "his Anointed" (i.e. God's Christ, xlviii, 10 ; lii, 4), who pre-exists in heaven with God before his appearance on earth. There is evidence in the New Testament that this book was known and influential, if not in the very earliest Church, certainly by the time the books of the New Testament were written. When to this Jewish belief in a pre-existent Messiah we add the prevalent belief in heavenly beings intermediary between God and the world and in "principalities and powers" of evil with whom the saviour of men must be able to deal on more than equal terms, and also the difficulty which pre-evolutionary thought must have in doing justice to the creativeness of Jesus except as a divine inruption, we find the influences which will account for the tendency of New Testament thought to the assertion of the divine pre-existence of Jesus. And the Greek dogmas of the antithesis of the human to the divine and of the impassibility of God concurred with, and supported, this movement. In any case, the theologians of the creeds took the statements of New Testament thought as their data, though the length and bitterness of the controversy is evidence as to the indefiniteness of what they found there.

But before tracing this development in its later phases, we must consider a rather different though similarly motivated bent of Christian thought appearing in the birth stories of Matthew and Luke. The incompatibility of these narratives with the personal pre-existence of

Jesus is obvious, for in them the antecedent of the divine in Jesus is the Holy Spirit and not a pre-existing Son of God. This incompatibility has its confirmation by converse in the Fourth Gospel, where the pre-existence is most clearly stated and Jesus is known to his disciples as "the son of Joseph" (i, 45). Neither "Q" nor Mark says anything of the virgin birth. The expression of Mark iii, 21, translated "his friends" can mean nothing but "his kinsfolk", i.e. those who reappear in iii, 31, as "his mother and his brethren", so that Mary came with the family "to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself". And when Jesus was told that they were without seeking him, he answered, "Who is my mother and my brethren?" and looking on the people who sat round him, he said, "Behold, my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother and sister and mother." The action of Mary and Jesus' repudiation of her, as here recorded, are both quite incompatible with the truth of the birth stories. Paul does not appear to have known anything of the virgin birth, and, as we have seen above, Romans i, 1-7, seems to exclude it. In Matthew the virgin birth of Jesus is given as the fulfilment of the prophecy "Behold a virgin shall conceive . . .", where the word "virgin" is a Greek mistranslation of a Hebrew word meaning simply a young woman of marriageable age. And the story reflects upon the honesty of Mary in that she did not take Joseph into her confidence, as we should judge she was in honour bound to do. In Luke the verses in which the virgin birth is explicitly foretold (i, 34, 35) have the appearance of not being originally

part of the story in which they are set. We are told that Mary was betrothed to Joseph who was of the house of David (i, 27), and the angel tells her she shall bear a son "and the Lord shall give unto him the throne of his father David" (i, 31, 32). In view of her betrothal Mary's question, "How shall this be, seeing that I know not a man?" is so strange as to be intelligible only as an introduction to the next verse, in which the angel seems to imply that the child is not to be Joseph's. This implication of the angel's speech is, however, by no means indubitable, and it may be that the phrase, "seeing that I know not a man," was added by a copyist who wished to make it so, whereas the original narrative assumed that the child could be both son of man and son of God. In any case Luke's later narrative (ii, 41-51) tells us that Mary spoke of Joseph as Jesus' father, and though it may be contended that she was here speaking conventionally, it is difficult to think that if the narrator had not believed Joseph to be Jesus' father he could have written as he did. The genealogies both in Matthew and Luke trace the descent of Jesus through Joseph, and Luke traces the divine sonship of Jesus through Adam to God (iii, 38).

But the preservation of the birth stories, their popularity, and the tenacity with which they are held by large numbers of Christians to-day, suggest that they meet a deeply felt need. And we can see that in pre-evolutionary thought it was impossible except in some such way as this to find adequate expression for the Christian experience of Jesus. When God's supreme activity and power were connected with an initial act of creation of a quite different sort from his activity

in the common process of life and history, justice could not be done to the spiritually creative power of Jesus except by regarding him as the result of an intrusion of the creative activity of God into the ordinary processes of history. And the idea of a miraculous virgin birth offered an effective way of expressing this.

We return to the parallel expression of this need to be found in the New Testament doctrines of Jesus' pre-existence, which became the accepted data of all parties in the controversies connected with the making of the great Christian creeds. The points here at issue were the relation of this pre-existent being to God, and the relation of the human to the divine in Jesus. These were dealt with on the background of the Greek dogmas that God was incapable of suffering and that the mortal human and immortal divine were antithetic kinds of being. The interests at stake were the validity of the revelation of God in Jesus and the efficacy of his salvation for man. The salvation in view was not so much salvation from sin as the gift of immortality to man, the divine and immortal becoming human and dying that the mortal might become immortal and divine. It is characteristic of the thought of these centuries and of its difference both from ours and from Jewish thought that this antithesis of the human and divine had practical expression in the exaltation of celibacy and asceticism as the Christian ideal.

It is fairly clear that the Greek presuppositions made any adequate solution of the problem impossible. But there is no doubt that on the generally accepted bases, the makers of these creeds did on the whole the best thing that could be done. Without attempting to

explain how, they asserted that the Son, who had suffered and died for love's sake, was no less of the Godhead than the Creator Father, thus affirming that suffering love was as essential in the deity as creative power. Also, without attempting to explain how it could be, they merely asserted that Jesus was both human and divine.

But the doctrine of the personal pre-existence of Jesus as the second person of the Triune Godhead has difficulties which do not belong merely to modern conditions of thought. In addition to the very significant fact that the first three Gospels have no inkling of it, it is positively incompatible with what we are there told of Jesus. To one whose personal life was continuous with a pre-existence as Son of God in heaven, what point would there be in the suggested doubt, "*If thou art the Son of God . . .*"? Or how could such a one be in any way tempted to do homage to the evil one? Or to tempt the Lord his God? And how could such a one rebut temptations by applying to himself citations from the Scriptures which define the condition of man in the exclusively and specifically human relation to God? And these questions are the more pertinent because the story of the temptations in the wilderness must be autobiographical, and would be definitely misleading to the hearers if the speaker was conscious of being anything other than human. And, again, how could such a one say, "Not what I will, but what thou wilt"? How could he cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" To say, as one used to hear it said, that he did or said this or that as man, and this or that as God, means in any case that when he

spoke as man he was playing a part and was not truly and wholly himself in what he said, but in face of these questions it means that he said in character of man what explicitly contradicted his real being.

The greatest difficulty is in the statement that he was tempted. Was it possible for him to sin? To ask the question is to show us that we cannot keep both the personal divine pre-existence of Jesus and his true manhood. For if we say, "Yes," we commit ourselves to the assertion that God can sin the sins of man. If we say, "No," then we have to explain in what sense a being who could not sin could be tempted to do so. The traditionally orthodox theologian's only recourse here is to subterfuge, one of the most remarkable examples of which is the suggestion that Jesus could not sin, but did not know that he could not, which, of course, means that his moral consciousness was always deceptive. This indicates the deplorable straits to which so-called orthodoxy is now put to maintain its front. No wonder that other theologians tell us that we must be content to regard the matter as a mystery too great for human intelligence. But is it not a contradiction in terms rather than a mystery to assert that one who could not sin could be tempted? Is it in the spirit of Jesus to assert that his moral nature cannot be intelligibly related to his divinity? Is it not rather just what his goodness means with regard to his divinity that is precious to us?

But the dogma of pre-existence affects more than the mere question of temptation: it touches the whole quality of Jesus' moral self-consciousness. For if we think him to have been (always or usually) unconscious

of his prior existence in heaven, then his self-consciousness was out of touch with by far the most important factor in the reality of his being, so that when he said "I" he spoke from a point of view in which he was deceived. How can we look for the truth from one, the centre of whose conscious life was deceptive on the most important point of its own being? On the other hand, if he was conscious of his pre-existence and remembered the glory from which he came and to which he was returning, then it was very much easier for him to face misunderstanding, rejection, and death than it would have otherwise been. The dogma thus does an indignity to the heroism of his goodness and reduces the costliness of it towards that of the journalist who goes in disguise from a comfortable home to spend a night with the poor in the lodging-house or on the streets: the memory of the comfortable home from which he came and to which he will return makes an interesting adventure for him of conditions which for those to whom he goes are disaster and tragedy. What is his endurance compared with theirs?

The extreme difficulty of making room for the true humanity of Jesus in any scheme of thought that contains the dogma of his personal divine pre-existence has several notable results. One is that very commonly Christians who are not theologians think of him as not being human at all except in body. They think of him as a God in man's body and to some extent in man's mentality, but not with human moral consciousness and not with human religious life. They do not believe that he was really tempted: they believe that he was good because he could not help being good, and that

he had something very much better than faith to live by ; all of which abates the valour and majesty and wonder of his human goodness.

It is therefore not surprising that popular Christianity has small concern with the goodness of Jesus, and what there is has peculiar emphasis. An evidence of this is the common way in which (especially in hymns for children) the goodness of God is presented in connection, not with the goodness of Jesus, as it is told in the Gospels, but with the goodness of the Son of God in leaving his throne in heaven to come to earth and die for men, and with God's own act in sending him. This method of presentation is undoubtedly striking and, under certain conditions, effective, but it has grave disadvantages :—

(1) Not only is the human goodness of Jesus thrown into the shade, but faith and courage, devotion to God and heroism, become, as we have seen, meaningless in such a one, and the only side of his goodness that is stressed is his meekness and gentleness, so that the “gentle Jesus” of piety is little more than a caricature of the awful and heroic figure of Mark's Gospel.

(2) If this was the truth of Jesus' death, how are we to think of God's relation to others who, without his privilege of position, have died for right and truth and love ? Does it not make their act finer and more heroic than his ? Is not Jesus so taught that boys cannot be blamed for thinking many heroes more heroic than he ? In the hymn, “The Son of God goes forth to war,” it is the heroism of Jesus' followers rather than his own that is put before us for our inspiration and imitation.

(3) To insist on the doctrine of his pre-existence as

essential to the divine import of Jesus is to exchange the connection which our conscience affirms between achieved human goodness and God for one which is quite out of the range of human experience : it is to insist that we must have a certain belief about Jesus before he can help us, instead of finding in him our greatest aid to saving faith ; and it leaves people to conclude that if they cannot heartily believe this elaborately wrought theology (*vide* the Athanasian Creed) they need not expect to find any help in Jesus.

(4) To insist that the divine in Jesus came by unique intrusion is to imply the undivinity of the process into which it was intruded. It makes it the harder to connect God with life. It implies that Jesus was not the truth of the process that produced us, i.e. that he is not the truth of humanity.

(5) By diminishing the valour and obscuring the heroism of the human goodness of Jesus, it minimizes precisely those elements which we might expect a true incarnation to add to our understanding of God's character.

(6) To instance as the supreme act of divine goodness the coming down of God from heaven to share our lot in life and death is to apply to creatorship a standard of ethics which humanity has outgrown. The notion that a creator of men and women has no more obligation to them than a potter to his pots is abhorrent to us. The father who, basking on the beach, sees his children in peril of drowning, would be reckoned, even though the peril comes from disobedience, as fulfilling only the minimum of decent conduct if he went down into the sea to their rescue. The popular presentation thus takes

it for granted that God is not seriously to be considered as our heavenly Father.

Anyone who knows the thinking of ordinary, orthodox, non-theological Christians, will know that it abounds in these inadequacies and mistakes.

When we turn to the theological side of what claims to be modern orthodoxy, we are offered a variety of conflicting solutions, of which three may be taken as representative :—

(1) Dr. Sanday suggested that the divinity of Jesus dwelt in his subliminal self. This means that though essentially divine, his divinity was not known to him in the self of which he was ordinarily conscious, which implies that his self-consciousness was ordinarily deceptive. And we need to remember that this suggestion as to the nature of the transition from pre-existence to incarnation has a forbidding analogy. For when, as sometimes happens, the conscious life lived by any person up to a certain point suddenly descends into the subliminal, and is followed by another series of experiences which (oblivious of the first except for occasional intrusions) forms the material for a distinct personal life, we have a recognized form of insanity, that of split personality—the extent to which the earlier life is submerged marking the extent to which the subsequent personal life is out of touch with reality.

(2) The kenosis theory maintains that the Logos or divine Son of God, by an act of self-renunciation, “emptied himself” (Phil. ii, 7) of the characteristic attributes of divinity and so became incarnate in the man Jesus. We need notice only certain of the many difficulties attending this proposition. The first comes

with the question (which we shall consider later) whether, when you subtract from a divine personality the characteristic attributes of deity, what is left is a human personality, or capable of becoming one. But if we grant that this may be so, then the question arises again, if we suppose the resulting consciousness to be aware of the past and therefore of the true nature of its being, would its life be truly human? Would it not have a superhuman advantage in meeting all life's conditions? On the other hand, if the resulting consciousness was not aware of the past and true nature of its being, was it not untrue to reality? And here also again comes the question, Could Jesus sin? If not, how could he suffer temptation? But if the kenosis resulted in the possibility of sin to the resultant being, is it right that a divine person incapable of sinning should voluntarily make himself capable of it?

(3) Many ostensibly orthodox theologians of to-day (Romanist, Anglican, and recently the Barthians of Germany), following the lead of that most unlovely of all theologians, Cyril of Alexandria, frankly acknowledge that, according to orthodox belief (as expressed in the formula of Chalcedon), it is impossible to think of Jesus as a man. He may be said, they contend, to have possessed humanity but not a human personality, for in him the place of the human ego, the subject of experience, was taken by the Logos or divine Son of God. This acknowledgment helps to clear the issue, and concentrates discussion upon the question as to whether a divine ego can have such human experience as would allow us to say that it possessed humanity. Especially is this so in view of a recent attempt (Dr. H. M. Relton,

A Study in Christology) to argue that because of certain human elements in the divine personality, it is capable of becoming the subject of a human personality. These conceptions, like those already considered, have no place for the human moral nature of Jesus. They can give no answer to the question, How can temptation be real to one to whom sin is impossible? And it is significant that in the book just referred to, this aspect of the matter is not considered.

But before dealing with the last-mentioned theories, we must review certain considerations which touch all attempts to regard the incarnation of God in Jesus as the transition of a divine personality into human life at a particular point in mid-history.

In the first place we need to note that the word "person" (or its Greek equivalent), as used by the makers of the great Christian creeds, did not carry the same meaning as we put into the word "personality", yet to us "person" must mean "personality" or it means nothing, so that their expression of thought is simply unavailable for us. The difference appears when we remember that the credal statement of three persons in one God always takes for granted that the unity dominates the distinctions, whereas if we consider any real or imaginary unity of personalities, as we understand personality, their distinctness always remains more marked than their unity. And when we speak of the moral or spiritual unity of personalities we imply all the more in each a distinctness and independence of conscious life capable of apprehending and valuing the other, and an independence of volition in each, that there may be conscious and free concurrence with the

other. Indeed, it is difficult to think of spiritual unity of personalities except on a basis of freedom that involves the possibility of difference. So that the would-be orthodox, when not trained in historical theology, commonly, by interpreting the credal "person" as equivalent to what they mean by "personality", believe in three Gods as distinct as any three gods of Olympus or Asgard. On the other hand, that the creed makers meant by "person" something less than we mean by "personality" finds confirmation in their conviction that they were reproducing the affirmation of scripture, where we find Paul speaking of God, of the Holy Spirit, and of the exalted Christ with a freedom of interchangeability (cf. "Now the Lord is the Spirit", 2 Cor. iii, 17) which shows that he had not in mind anything like the distinctness and untransferable individuality which we associate with the term "personality".

It is hardly necessary to point out that what modern ideas of personality compel us to read into the term "person", if we retain it at all, adds to the difficulty always felt in the credal assertion that we must think of Jesus as being of two natures in one person. For personality is to us an inward unity (or unifying process) of consciousness in true correspondence with reality both within and beyond itself. So that true and valid inward unity of personality would be impossible to a being of two distinct "natures". If we predicate two natures of a being in whom we find inwardly unified personality, we are convicted of mistake in our presupposition: what we took to be two now shows itself to be in reality one.

The theory of the personal pre-existence of Christ belongs to a time also when the relation of the world to the appearance of personalities in it was thought of in another way than has obtained since the general acceptance of the theory of evolution. When the various species were regarded as the result of separate acts of creation, and the spirit of man was thought of as a special divine insertion into an otherwise naturally formed body, it was not hard to think that a divine being might take the place usually given to a human spirit.

But such notions are no longer possible. A religious view of the doctrine of evolution compels us to regard the evolutionary process as the divinely energized and appointed means for the production of human personalities. All life is essentially hereditary: what we, as men, inherit from our human and prehuman ancestors is an essential and most important element in our personality. He who does not inherit the human heritage of instincts cannot know what it is to be a man. He has not faced our problems nor fought our battle, for the major problem of the good life is the mastery, use, and transformation of inherited instincts. To tell us that an ego from another sphere could enter the stream of human life, assume human nature, and experience human experience, is to say what is now unintelligible; even when regarded merely as the subject of experience, a personality cannot be human without inherited instincts, for their importance lies in what they, from within us, tend to make of occasions and events. If we abstract the instinctive from the human ego what can it, as human, know of overcoming

fear and anger, or of the exercise of love and compassion. The stream of life cannot be entered from without : man can be man only by being born in and of it. And the cost and hardship of the process give us to conclude that God uses it because there is no other way of bringing human personalities to being.

We seem thus shut up to the conclusion that if Jesus was truly man, then he must have been born of the hereditary life of which we are born ; so that if he is to be both truly human and truly divine to us, we must find a way of thinking of him other than as the intrusion into history of a personality who has hitherto lived as God in a superhuman sphere. When we see that life is essentially hereditary, and that man is not man without what he inherits from the whole past of life, we see that if God is to become incarnate in man, the process of his incarnation must be the whole process of evolutionary life and history.

It is perhaps not necessary to add anything to show the insuperable difficulty of accepting the contention that we must retain our orthodoxy according to the formula of Chalcedon by regarding the manhood of Jesus as impersonal, calling him man but not a man. The statement is not only in defiance of the Gospel record, where it is not to be denied that Jesus appears as a man, but it asks us to agree that there can be humanity without that experiencing, active, responsible, individual, incommunicable human subject without which man is not man at all. Growth in goodness is the progressive integration of personality round this centre, the passage from a continuum of consciousness to a centralized unity of self. It is here we find the

ground for the supreme value we place upon other selves, for the supreme authority we recognize in the will of God, and for our faith in his love for us and for our fellows. In proportion as I am man without being a man, I am a bad man.

It is, however, not only contended that the divine Logos took in Jesus the place of the human ego in ordinary men and became the subject of his human experience, which, it is contended, was thus a true human experience, so that we may speak of him as possessing true humanity, but Dr. Relton, in the work referred to, goes further, and suggests that, because of eternally human elements in God, the divine Logos could become the centre of a human personality, and that, since God alone has perfect personality, and man's is an imperfect copy of his, perfect humanity can only be found where the subject of it is divine, i.e. in the humanity of incarnate deity.

This statement seems to lose sight of the consideration that religiously viewed man is a being standing in a certain specific relation to God. As a personality, man is a being with a centralized experience having as a necessary concomitant of his own unity (or as a necessary condition of his own unification) the unification of his universe in and by the personality of God. The personality of man is essentially derivative: the personality of God essentially self-subsistent, and the recognition of this relation, as an essential quality of the personality of either, is a necessary part of true self-knowledge, human or divine. It is characteristic of human personality that we know God and our truest self by faith: we cannot think that faith is the means

of God's self-knowledge. Essential to all spiritually thorough human goodness is the acknowledgment that man's personality is derived from the self-subsistent personality of God, that God's goodness is different from man's in that the goodness of God is the source of man's goodness, and that man's goodness involves the recognition of its own derivativeness and the knowledge of itself as an acceptance of, and response to, as a reflection and instrument of, the divine goodness. In the highest sense, "There is none good but one—God" (Mark x, 18); and since Jesus uses the term "good" for man (e.g. Luke vi, 45), we cannot understand his reply to the rich ruler except as meaning that the goodness of God alone is self-subsistent, and that the truest human goodness cannot exist without the recognition of the difference in this respect between it and the divine goodness. One most important and undeniable difference between human and divine goodness seems bound up with the very nature of goodness as having its ground in the ultimate reality: derivative personalities must appropriate goodness by free choice involving the experience of temptation and the possibility of sin: God's goodness is that of the self-subsistent source of original goodness incapable of sin.

With these considerations in view, it will appear that it is very misleading to speak of human elements in the divine personality, if more is meant than is obviously implied in speaking of both God and man as personal beings. Personality in all beings must have certain common elements, but accurate thinking will not cite them as evidence of the human in the divine. It is true that man is akin to God, but not as man is

akin to his fellow man or to his human father, and his deeper kinship with God involves the distinction that here the child is also the creature of the Father who is creator. There is thus an essential difference between personality in God and in man that is not adequately described by saying that human personality is imperfect and the divine personality perfect. Human personality is no more an imperfect form of what we find perfect in God than the planet is an imperfect form of what we find perfect in the sun.

The suggestion that God and man are in the same series of personalities but at different points of it can save itself from absurdity and irreverence only by stipulating that human personality is necessarily and essentially imperfect. But does this mean imperfect by the intent of God? If so, is that imperfect which fulfils God's intent? If it is not his intent, how can his creature be *essentially* imperfect? And if appeal is made to the fall of man, that doctrine presupposes a prior human perfection.

It seems, therefore, that we must agree with the very considerable section of the would-be orthodox who maintain that it is impossible to think that the personality of God and the personality of man can be united in one and the same personality; but against them we must hold that a being whose personality or ego was God could not have a true human experience, that the personality of Jesus is a human personality, subject to temptation, and that there is neither sense nor salvation in proclaiming one who is man but not a man. It is the human goodness of Jesus that is the unique asset

of Christianity, without which his relation to God loses all value.

The reality of the temptation of Jesus has a direct bearing on the validity of his revelation of God and on the effectiveness of his saviourhood. It is possible to have an easy-going faith in a God who is moderately good, but such faith neither saves nor energizes. The supreme service of Jesus is that his achieved human goodness convinces us that God is eternally good with the heroic, infinitely costly goodness we see in him, and it is the writer's experience that, apart from the achieved human goodness of Jesus with its inevitable reference of itself to God, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to be convinced that God is good with this sort of goodness. Here, therefore, especially we see the need for regarding the goodness of Jesus as human goodness. And we see that he regarded the acts and suffering that mark the height of his goodness, not as works of supererogation, or as something superhuman, but as that to which the only alternative was sin, these being the matters in which he was tempted. It was in the height of human goodness—in loving our enemies (Matt. v, 43-8)—that he saw a response to, and a lineal reproduction of, the divine goodness. He went to the cross with all its agonies of body and mind in simple loyalty to what God was: to have shunned it would have been sin—treachery to the life of God in him.

So, too, unless we can see in Jesus a human personality, the content of his revelation of God's goodness is confused, besides being (as we have already seen) diminished. There can be only two sorts of goodness in the universe

—the goodness of God, who is both Creator and Father, and the goodness of those who are both his creatures and his children. The initiative generosity is God's, and this unique and fundamental originality of goodness neither creature nor child can share. The core of the goodness of God's child is in the recognition that the true source of goodness is not in himself : the initiative of the child is the initiative of free response. Man is not and cannot be good with the originative goodness of the Creator : if he tries to be so he falls into the sin of self-righteousness. It is obvious, therefore, that the same personality cannot exercise both sorts of goodness, and to try to regard anyone as doing so, is to impede and confuse our appreciation of their goodness.

And since complete and true human goodness will express the human relation to God, the Creator by taking the form of the creature could not produce true human goodness, for he cannot stand to himself in the relation in which his creatures and children stand to him. The divine ego in human form could no more result in a perfect man than your fellow-schoolmaster sitting with your boys in the class could become your ideal scholar.

This all drives us to conclude that there is only one way of regarding Jesus as both truly divine and human, and that is by seeing in him the culmination and creative focus of an incarnation that began with God's outgoing and self-giving in creation and persisted until it found victorious achievement in Jesus. We thus have a simpler and deeper understanding than can be had by any tampering with the essential difference between God, the creator, and man, the creature and child of God. If God is essentially self-giving, his whole being neither

is, nor is to be known, in himself alone, apart from that in which his outgoing results, but it is, and is known, in those in and to whom he gives himself. Especially God is, and is known, in him who recognizes truly and responds fully to the divine self-giving, and who therefore must himself suffer what God suffers in giving himself to the irresponsible, and who can thus open their eyes to that in God which they had not seen before and can bring God's love to them as a redemptive power. Such a one would know God in him as the truth and power of all that he was, and in such a one God would be himself as he could not be without him.

It may seem to some that we have been attributing to Jesus a higher sort of goodness than to God. As a matter of fact, most people do so. And one of the main arguments of this book is that there are only two ways of avoiding this. We may reduce the goodness of Jesus to the unheroic level and seat him with God in heaven, as much so-called orthodoxy does, or we must recognize that God is, and is to be found, in the whole creative process that culminates in Jesus, no less than in the creative initiative from which this process proceeds. Human goodness, especially as we know it in Jesus, is not a mere reflection and response of the undivine to the goodness of God : it is the eternal outgoing of God in creation coming to know itself by recognizing the God whose outgoing it is, and so becoming itself creative. The outcome of God's creativeness is not less God than the God who gives himself in the outgoing : the one cannot be truly known, and is not truly itself, without the other : the eternal Fatherhood and the eternal Sonship are essential to each other. And it is the worshipfulness

and creative power of the human goodness of Jesus that compels us to this conclusion.

(2)

Before we continue the attempt to discover how we should think of Jesus in his relation to God, it will be as well to consider the term "sinless", as applied to him in the traditional way of thinking.

It has two common uses. It is found in connection with sacrificial and juridical figures used to explain his death. As the beast sacrificed must be without blemish, so Jesus was sinless. If, by his death, he is to pay the penalty of sin for others, then his suffering must be, on his own part, undeserved : he must be sinless. In both cases the really significant thing in his death is obscured — that it was the culminating act of intense and unreserved love, commending itself to us as the measure and evidence, and indeed as the very act, of God's love. It is surely unnecessary, almost unmannerly, to insist that he "who loved me and gave himself for me" was not an evil man.

The other common use of the term "sinlessness" is in pointing to a "moral miracle" as proof that the origin of Jesus was other than ours. The argument is that all men are sinners, therefore a sinless man must be a miraculously divine intrusion into human life. In other words, Jesus was so good, that he must have been good on other and easier terms than those under which we struggle, which, of course, means that his goodness was not as costly and heroic as it would have been if he had been simply man. It amounts to saying,

“As a human achievement, his goodness is too good to be true, therefore we will diminish it to credibility by calling it a miracle.”

Against such artificial uses of the word “sinless” as applied to Jesus, there has been a reaction in some minds leading them to pause over certain of his acts and words which (though admittedly capable of other explanation) may be construed as moral imperfections—such as the limitation of his work to Israel and the asperity of his invective against the Pharisees. But if we are to regard these as moral imperfections, what do we mean by so doing? Are they to be taken as an indication of moral insensibility, or selfishness, or rebellion against God? If not, what do they signify more than mere infirmities, no more morally significant than that he slept while the rest of his boat-fellows toiled? If they were acts of the sort that he himself could not see to be sins, then either they indicate moral obtuseness, or they depended upon unavoidable limitations, and were part of a true humanity. If they were of the sort that he could see to be sins, would he not have repented, and made his repentance clear? Had he, in what he said to, or of, the Pharisees, allowed anger to transgress justice or charity, would he not have confessed it and asked pardon? Or if he did not, would it not have been rebellion against God? It seems that to take exception on moral grounds to any of the recorded acts or words of Jesus cannot make good its significance without introducing conclusions incompatible with surer and more positive evidences of his spirit.

The term sinless can be applied (or denied) to Jesus on one or both of two grounds, the witness of his own

conscience, and the application of a moral standard to his recorded words and deeds. Leaving the former aside for a moment, we see that to discuss the question on the second ground is to presume that, apart from him, we know what perfect goodness is like, and can therefore perceive that he comes up to, or falls short of, our standard. But the whole significance of his life is that we did not know what supreme goodness was like until we recognized it in him, and in him it appears to be, not so much an effort of conformity to a set standard, as an unmeasured expenditure of love.

This being so, when, in the authentic deeds or words of Jesus, we find that at which our conscience pauses, it is best to remember that only the spirit of justice and truth and love is eternally right, and that in the exigencies of extraordinary endeavour the means of the Spirit may have to be unusual. In the conduct of Florence Nightingale at Scutari towards officials and nurses, incidents may be selected the moral quality of which is questionable until we remember the peculiar circumstances and the appalling suffering, to lessen which she did not hesitate occasionally to sacrifice others' ease of body or mind as she constantly sacrificed her own. In the same way, we may remember that in Jesus' invective against the Pharisees, he was attacking an influence which he found to be the main barrier between his people and his truth. In limiting himself to Israel, he was limiting himself to the people that gave him to be crucified rather than accept his call to wider thought and wider love, and he felt the temporary limitation—"I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!" It is therefore

more consonant with his observed freedom in other respects to suppose that his self-limitation here was in the interests of ultimate larger effectiveness.

Probably many people, both those who apply the term "sinless" to Jesus and those who hesitate to do so, feel that the term suggests, if it does not imply, something non-human, an exactitude that might be expected of a machine or a minor work of fine art, but not of profound and abundant life, an exactitude suggestive of mediocre spiritual vitality and limited sympathy.

But when we remember that our only justification for calling Jesus sinless is not that we have apart from him a standard of perfection and can prove that at no point did he diverge from it, but that we do not know human perfection apart from him, and have only the witness of his own conscience on the matter, then it becomes more intelligibly human. For we need to remember that we have experience of moments (and amongst our best) in which shortcomings discernible as measured by an external standard are, we are sure, spiritually insignificant. There are occasions of activity upon which a man, who readily owns himself imperfect and who knows that this imperfection infects every act, will yet look back with joy unshadowed by regret. The thing was so good that imperfections do not count : a sense of sin here would be treachery to the good. So, too, in certain wholesome moments of a more passive sort of religious experience, it is a sin against the hospitality of God if his guests mar their fellowship with him by nervousness about their behaviour's lack of perfection. If there are such things as sins that do not spring from selfishness, pride, and rebellion against

God, then any of them that can coexist with intense and active love for God and man are rather spiritually moribund infirmities ; and an acute sense of sin about them would probably spring rather from pride of character than from love of God. If we can think of a man whose whole life is full of impassioned devotion to God and love to man, must we not think that the question of his own perfection would appear to his soul as an impertinence ? A sinless man would surely count the question of his own sinlessness irrelevant.

In Jesus we see a completely self-giving devotion, which, by its power over us and especially by its power of making us recognize God's love in his, does effectively overcome the evil in us and make the good lastingly triumphant. This triumphant content and quality of our faith in God we get from him and cannot hold without him. It began in him, and it is clear that this quality of goodness in him, and the relation with God that goes with it, could not have coexisted in him with any sort of sin that inhibits God in the soul (and what does anything else that we may call " sin " matter ?). Why should we not, therefore, think that this saving faith, which had its beginning in him, and which, evoked by him in others, overcomes sin in them, overcame sin in him with the first consciousness of possible evil, and grew from then onwards, deepening in the increasing conflict with evil until it finally triumphed in his death ?

And in that last conflict the cry, " My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? " marks at least two things. Whatever we take " forsaken " to mean, it tells us that Jesus did not know why he was forsaken ; he was not conscious of any unfaithfulness in himself that would

account for it. And in this terrible hour of desolation and failure God to him is still "My God": his faith triumphs over the worst conspiracy of circumstance and agony.

(3)

All Christians agree that in Jesus God was in man to the utmost. The real question is, What is God's relation to other men and to the universe which he made to produce them? Until that is answered, we cannot think intelligibly of Jesus, and unless we answer in the light of his truth we shall think of him wrongly. The orthodox scheme declares that God's presence in Jesus was of a quite different kind from his presence in other men, that Jesus' relation to God was of a quite different sort from other men's relation to God, that God did not want to be in other men as he was in Jesus, and did not want to be to other men what he was to Jesus.

But if we believe that God is as Jesus showed him to be in his teaching, his life, and his death, then we are bound to believe that God was to the utmost possible in every man, that he was without reserve seeking the good of each, and that in so far as we differ from Jesus in what God is to us, in so far as he is not in us as he was in Jesus, it is not God's desire that it should be so. If this is so, then we must see in Jesus the culminating achievement of a universally active divine process. If we are not as Jesus, it must be (so far as the cause does not lie in our unwillingness) because of conditions inevitable in the very nature of the process, and not because God does not want us to be so. The uniqueness of Jesus

must therefore be understood from the nature of the whole process of life and history—of God's way with the world.

And this conclusion cannot be disposed of by maintaining that the appearance of sin in the world thwarted the original divine intent and necessitated a divine intrusion in order to make a new beginning. For the possibility of sin was bound up with the freedom that made divine fellowship possible for man. And if there was no remedy for sin without the introduction of an entirely new divine factor (i.e. the incarnation of a divine person in Jesus), then there must have been, from the beginning of sin in the race, a progressive moral and spiritual decline ; whereas we see the opposite. Ethical and spiritual headway, made in spite of sin, is the outstanding interest of the Old Testament. The Spirit of God, before the time of Jesus, did actually overcome sin in the race to the extent of producing in the teeth of iniquity a line of progressive goodness and spirituality.

If we think of God as over against the world striking at this and that rare moment into the world process and acting upon it for his purposes with greater effect than usual, then the unanswerable question arises, Why does he not always strike in ? If we are told we must not question God's ways, we answer that we question any attribution to him of a way less than the best. And if God is not always doing his utmost for good in the world, how are we to think of his relation to it ? But if God has always been in the world process, active in it to the full extent of its capacity, then we shall see in Jesus the culmination and not the antithesis of God's ordinary

way of working in the world. If we start with the notion of a God who might be more in, and to, mankind than he generally is, then the utter self-giving of Jesus to his fellows is unintelligible. If we start with belief in a God whose eternal self-giving is known in Jesus, then we see in Jesus the truth of what God was, is, and ever shall be to men, so far as their willingness and development make possible.

If, in asking how we are to think of Jesus, we start from the relation of God to man as implied in our ethical activity and as given explicitness by Jesus, we shall find that our experience of him as a man without superhuman advantages over his fellow men brings us to see that he is, not only entirely divine, but the consummate concentration of the divine, unique throughout the whole range of all being. For we start from the affirmation that man is akin to God, made by God of the very being of God, that he might know God and find his own and God's end in fellowship with God. Man's achieved goodness is thus the revelation and assurance of God's goodness. In us the goodness is incomplete and the fellowship broken: we have misused the divine to most undivine ends: even the noble and true have fallen short, for if to the making of man there went a divine self-giving to the uttermost, then the human heart that is to respond truly and wholly to God must be one in which there are combined the most sensitive and inclusive spiritual understanding and the most passionate and heroic devotion. And it is in Jesus that we find this and see that which has its being and freedom in the outgoing and self-giving of God rendered back to God in complete

devotion, so that in him there is an unequalled wholeness of the divine : God is more wholly God in him than elsewhere. Jesus is the full emergence of the divine immanent in the universe, achieving complete concord with the Spirit of God that dwells in man, and therefore also with the infinite and transcendent Power that is the source of all being and of all good. In him there is an enriched resumption of the wholeness of God and the beginning of a new creation, for, as we have seen, the goodness of Jesus is not to be measured by its absence of defect but by its power to overcome evil and evoke in men their own remaking to the height of God's intent.

It thus appears that the only fit antecedent of Jesus is a God who is always as deeply involved in the life and history of the world as its conditions make possible. So that if we think of a pre-existent Son of God away from the world and apart from the help of man and needing to take unexampled action in order to enter into human life, then such pre-existent Son of God is thought of as less eager to help mankind than was Jesus or the God whom Jesus teaches us to believe in. But if the divine antecedents of Jesus were like him in character, then they are to be sought, not in heaven, but as deeply involved in and identified with human history as possible.

If God always gave himself and exerted himself for human good, then we cannot regard Jesus merely as reflecting God : he is both the greatest achievement of God and the greatest means to God's achievement. The divine outgoing that works in, and is the very being of, the universe, is, in the conscious and full co-operation of Jesus, carried into its highest and

intensest phase of effectiveness. And without Jesus God lacks his chief instrument to his chief end, the bringing of men to know and respond to his love. God becomes effective in Jesus in the sense that in Jesus men know a God whom they spontaneously want to obey, and who can thus command their innermost loyalty in a way that no mere power can do.

And here again we find the need for the true humanity of Jesus, for, as we saw, there is a difference between the goodness of the Creator and the goodness of his children, and both sorts of goodness must speak in the command that is to secure the free response of the whole and the inmost of man. The faith on which all human goodness depends, and which is bound up with the finitude of man, has its own glories. If a man was omniscient, his goodness would be of an inferior sort. The man who dies in loyalty to truth believes that he is doing what is best for himself and others, but he does not know it with the sort of knowledge with which he puts a thousand pounds into a sound and lucrative investment. There is a valour of heroism in the one that is not in the other. By so involving man's goodness in faith, the Creator gives it a glory of finitude that his own cannot have, compensating for the initiative and infinite bounty of his own goodness. And therefore the goodness of God in his infinitude needs the goodness of God incarnate in a man that we may worship wholeheartedly and be saved by a goodness that can command to the utmost and invoke in the inmost.

At first thought it might seem as though the incarnation of God, working through what shows outwardly as a process of evolution, should find its supreme point

at the end, and not midway. But if so, the culmination of God's incarnation would be an exhibition of perfection and not a power unto salvation. Rather we need to see that because of the costly and dangerous gift of human freedom, and because of the intimacy of God in human history, a true and complete concord with the will of God will show itself not by conformity to standard or fulfilment of ideal so much as by a consummate heroism of redemptive devotion, and its place therefore will be at the turning-point of the struggle between good and evil rather than when the war is over.

The divine way with man, therefore, will not produce a gradual general approximation to the ideal extending more or less evenly over the whole course of history. The conflict between good and evil, the costliness of advance in goodness, and the fact that goodness, to survive, must be of the sort that overcomes evil, will result in great differences of racial and individual achievement, in cumulative effects and concentrations. And where this advance is most effective there will be a historic culmination : the conflict between good and evil will go on till goodness of the redemptive quality appears. Then the course of the world's spiritual history will change : it will no longer be the divine and cosmic struggle to produce the human goodness through which the divine goodness may act redemptively, but, this having been achieved, the task will be to make it available and effective throughout the world and the years to come.

The consummation of God's incarnation will be at the turning-point of this conflict, where the greatest effectiveness and the greatest costliness coincide. The cost of following Jesus can never be so great as the cost

of his leading, for he gives us the help which he had to find for himself. So that in this respect, in the very nature of things, God's incarnation in him is unique and unrepeatable. If we see that the outstanding thing in Jesus was the terrible costliness of the goodness that was effective at the turning-point of the world-struggle between good and evil, costliness not in bodily pain only but in venture and agony of soul, then we see that, if he achieved truly, others in this respect neither need be nor can be like him.

We shall proceed to a more detailed review of some of the important moments in the history of this development and conflict, the culmination and supreme crisis of which is in the life and death of Jesus.

(4)

All that has just been said will go to show the importance of the historic place of Jesus. When we speak of the supreme revelation or supreme act of God, it is clear that the significance of the point of consummation cannot be truly seen except in relation to all that it consummates.

In the first place, when we say that what God was in Jesus he sought to be in all, we must remember that it was not only the unwillingness of man that impeded him. Another connected and most important factor was immaturity. Otherwise the process of history that preceded Jesus could not have led up to him, but would have been a mere decline from bad to worse. Apart from immaturity, we could not account for the honest imperfection of the many who prepared the way for him.

The subject of Christian thought, therefore, is not God in Jesus alone, but God in humanity as interpreted, centralized, and consummated in Jesus. Jesus' relation to humanity both before and after him is no less essential to what he was than is his relation to God. This has always been recognized by Christianity, in that it has regarded the Old Testament and the Church as essential elements in the history of Jesus. He is the interpretative centre of all history and of the whole process of the evolution of life.

The history that culminates in Jesus had its roots in pre-human nature. This has something to say with regard to the difficulty that many a man feels at the pain of the struggle for existence in animal life. He has read the religious history of mankind and seen its consummation in Jesus and his teaching of God as Father, but he has also learnt something of natural history and found that

“ Nature, red in tooth and claw

With ravine, shriek'd against his creed ”.

And nothing can overcome the contradiction but to see that in Jesus and his truth we have the outcome and inner secret of that very life and power which in some aspects of nature shows so differently. Here it is worth noting that though we inherit that life with its red record, yet we find the spirit of Jesus so native to our own spirit, that we criticize the Power behind nature from his point of view. And it should be remembered that the sympathy and pity that are characteristic of Christianity and the consequent vividness of imagination are apt to make us attribute

to animal life a sensitiveness to pain as great as our own, whereas, owing to their less developed nervous system, only the higher vertebrates know pain with anything approaching the intensity of our capacity for it. The same sympathy (generally greater for pain than for pleasure) tends to make us underestimate the value of the fact that the extermination of the weaker secures that the survivors are full of vigour and the joy of life, there being practically no disease in wild life. We are also in the same way apt to lose sight of the importance of co-operation and parental love and self-sacrifice in the wild world, for they are really more indicative of life, since the lioness feels her affection for her cubs, but does not feel the fear or pain of the prey she hunts for them: she is conscious of love but has not imagination enough to be conscious of cruelty. Then, also, the protective heroisms with which the animal world so often astonishes us, could hardly have had place except in a world of the hunter and hunted. Without the struggle it is difficult to see how the higher forms of life could have emerged at all, and we see that the pain of it is a necessary condition in the development of such things as human courage, heroism, self-sacrifice. It comes as a crowning consideration that Jesus is the culmination of the whole process of evolutionary life, and that the age-long struggle with its concomitants of pain and death was an essential preliminary to his being.

The process of human history as culminating in Jesus shows two main interacting features, corresponding to his power to reveal and to save. There is growth in intelligence, in sensitiveness, in the urge to inward

wholeness of personality and intelligibility of experience, to better thoughts of God and greater loyalty to his will—a movement of growth as children of God. But this growth, as we have seen, has to make itself good in struggle with evil, which impedes and confuses, which makes loyalty more and more costly, which challenges good to the death, so that, as humanity progresses, there comes a time when goodness must either succumb or overcome evil in its most powerful form by evincing a heroic redemptiveness. The ascent to goodness and fellowship with God, if it finds a culmination at all, must find it in one whose goodness is love at utmost cost, and whose sacrifice will be in vain if there is not in it an overcoming of evil so potent for the help of others that it need not, and indeed cannot, be repeated in its own terrible costliness.

Some of the moments of this age-long process are obvious. The general form of a historic process finding its highest personality at a median point, and not at the end, is illustrated in the history of all the greater religions. We find a regular succession of stages, the tribal religion passing into the national religion, and the national into the universal, the transition from the national to the universal always being mediated by a supreme personality, the founder and then the human centre of the universal religion. Thus we have it in Zoroastrianism, in Buddhism, and in Islam, which with Christianity are the four religions that have transcended racial limits and become universal not only in claim but to some extent in effect, being at their best vigorously missionary. But the interesting point is that in all four their greatest personality—Zoroaster, Gautama,

Mohammed, Jesus—stand at, and are the effective force in, the transition from the national (in Mohammed's case, the tribal) to the universal.

Another point to be noted is that the history of Israel, as culminating in Jesus, does itself stand in unique relation to the history of the human race. Where Europe, Asia, and Africa meet at the eastern end of the Mediterranean is a region of diversity, with two great river valleys, Egypt and Mesopotamia, stretches of desert and pasture land, mountains, seas, islands, peninsulars, such as the world has nowhere else, obviously the place which, by providing a unique balance between shelter from attack and opportunity for cultural contact, and a unique diversity of condition within a given compass, will be the forcing bed of human development. There we have the civilizations and empires of Egypt, Babylon, of the Hittites, of Assyria, Persia, Macedonia, and Rome, and there the two unique spiritual achievements of Greece and Israel.

The story of Israel begins with the Semitic nomads wandering in the fringe of pasture lying between the desert and the belt of sown land that beginning in Egypt and ending in Mesopotamia stretches through Palestine. Their manner of life, its continual, quiet, vital touch with the more majestic side of nature, its frequent solitude, its leisure unperturbed by the amusements and pleasures of settled life, with which, however, it came from time to time into critical and stimulating contact, all these combined to provide conditions which allowed the intensity, characteristic of the most primitive forms of religion, to persist with enhancement in a higher stage, instead of religion's

sinking, as was so common with the settled life of agriculture, into a mere means to material prosperity. But the nomad, by increase of numbers and by the temporary or permanent drying up of pastures, is again and again driven to seek a living at the expense of the settled peoples. The strong civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia made Palestine the only likely outlet, which, when the Hebrews attacked, they found inhabited by people of their own stock. And it seems probable that history was here repeating itself, and that this Palestinian outlet had been in the past overrun by nomads who had settled, softened under settled life, and in their turn become the victims of fresh aggressors. So that we have in the geography and early history of Palestine a process of selection waiting for a wave of nomadism sturdy enough to enter and settle, and to resist both subsequent comers and the process of degeneration hitherto attendant upon the change from nomad to settled life.

Such a wave of nomadism came with the Hebrews, who had already apparently had contact with Mesopotamia, and a part of whom at least had been in long association with Egypt, and who yet retained, probably with deepened consciousness, their desert ways of life and thought. The conquering and preservative quality was in the intensity of their religion, which gave them irresistible onset in war, made a unity of their otherwise disunited tribes, and was an inexhaustible resource of recovery in defeat. With this social element of their religion went the personal equality and brotherhood of their Bedouin ethics ; and their subsequent history was marked by the stubborn retention of the

faith and ideals of the desert in intimate contact with the very different religion and conduct of the settled peoples with whom at first they shared Canaan, and whom they ultimately absorbed. This sensitive but profound conservatism, stimulated by the need for adapting itself to changed conditions, drove them to unexampled growth in ethics and religion, which in course of time produced, in the great prophets of the eighth and two following centuries, a unique series of geniuses in these concerns.

We have thus a process by which the most religious race was filtered out and submitted to conditions in which its peculiar gift must be resigned or must proceed to develop in face of most exacting and many-sided experience, for Palestine was the bridge between Egypt and the rest of the world, and was itself unfitted by position, size, and natural resources to be the seat of wide dominion. Israel, surrounded by great empires, had to find its life's glory and courage in its religion, upon which it was continually driven back. Its history and survival remind us of the survival of prehistoric man among the teeth and claws of the brute world—a situation depicted in Daniel vii. The very shape of the earth combined with the Spirit of God and of man in the movement that stretches from the captivity in Egypt, through Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and the great anonymous voices of the Babylonian captivity, on to its culmination in Jesus.

The latter part of this movement shows itself as the struggle of the Spirit of God in man against the world's evil. The sin of their times evoked his voice in the prophets, and the recognition of the need of salvation

from sin was one of the forces in the ascending line of spiritual advance which found its highest point in the production of an effective antidote. The history is full of features unparalleled in other races, as, for instance, the survival of the national religion after the destruction of the nation by Babylon. It survived by meeting disaster with an enhanced and spiritualized faith, with purer and loftier thought of God's oneness, his righteousness, and his supremacy as the only God. This experience quickened the Hebrews' appreciation of the uniqueness of their own religion and ethics, and brought gleams of a destiny as the light-givers of the world. But for the present the prevailing effect was the conviction that loyalty to God demanded that they should keep themselves from being contaminated by other peoples. And for the next five or six centuries we have an unparalleled national segregation under a dominant and recognized interest. Religion and ethics were bred into them. This period culminates (observers have noticed that the high peaks of racial development are about six centuries apart) in a time that saw the Baptist, Paul, the writer of the Fourth Gospel, and above all, Jesus. It may be noted that though the great prophets of Israel came in the centuries that saw Zoroaster, the Buddha, Confucius, and Laotse, Israel alone bore this second and greater harvest of the spirit.

But the geographical, racial, and political conditions, in the midst of which Israel's development took place, also resulted in the rise and passing of empire after empire until at length the world was dominated by Rome, who in the acquisition of dominion had lost its own religion and taken the heart out of all others, with

solitary exception of Israel, which, at the beginning of our era, was, of all peoples under Rome, the only one with a living religion. But the segregation and racial self-consciousness of Israel's religious development were inseparable from an intense patriotism, which made the time of Jesus the greatest crisis of his nation's history, for, under the pressure of long subjugation, patriotism was hardening into a fanatic scorn and hatred of the Gentile, and especially of Rome, and was moving towards a rebellion that could only end in national ruin. This outlook is enough to explain the impending doom which the Baptist proclaimed, connecting it with his fellow-countrymen's pride of religious privilege as children of Abraham (Luke iii, 8). The only alternative to this disastrous issue was for Israel to find the glory of patriotism in giving to the world that for lack of which the world was perishing—a living faith—the destiny which the greatest of its ancient prophets had forecast. But in order to accomplish this, Israel must put aside its arrogance, learn to love its enemies, and must abrogate those elements of the law which barred intercourse between Jew and Gentile. By so doing, Israel might lead the needy and waiting world into the kingdom of God: so Jesus came proclaiming "The kingdom of God is at hand", as opportunity over against doom.

It is clear that the driving force needed to realize this opportunity must be just the invasive, unstinted, self-giving love, that is central in the teaching and life of Jesus. Had the Jews followed him in this, it would, through their numbers, scattered throughout the empire, but still in close touch with Jerusalem, have fired the heart of the world in less than a generation, just as, if

they did not, their fanaticism in less than a generation would work itself out in national ruin. The possibilities of the position are enough to give meaning to the so-called apocalyptic elements of Jesus' teaching in which, within the lifetime of the then living, glorious opportunity stands over against national ruin. "Verily I say unto you, There be some here of them that stand by, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power" (Mark ix, 1).

The people of Palestine were at first inclined to listen to Jesus, but the religious authorities soon showed themselves suspicious and antagonistic. Though Israel's relation to the Gentiles is not specifically mentioned in this connection, we may note that the points at issue were precisely the Mosaic regulations that came between Jew and Gentile—those that concerned the Sabbath and ceremonial uncleanness. Here was the gravamen of the charge that he ate with publicans and sinners, they being, in the eyes of the righteous, tantamount to Gentiles. Jesus took the offensive by his cleansing of the court of the Gentiles and his assumption of authority over the Temple with the declaration, "Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations? but ye have made it a den of robbers" (Mark xi, 15-17). His action put the religious authorities of Jerusalem in a position where they must either accept him as a prophet of God, if not more, or must put him out of the way. He was staking his life, or rather, since the conclusion was practically foregone, was laying it down, in an appeal to the nation to judge between him and his opponents, an appeal so made as to reveal the divine stress behind it. But the people would not

follow the lead of his self-giving, and so to the pangs of crucifixion was added the greater anguish of knowing that his endeavour to save them was vain. "Daughters of Jerusalem," he said on the way to the cross, "weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children."

The death of Jesus did for his followers what he had hoped it would do for his people ("The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many")—it freed them from the binding prestige of the religious authorities which was holding them back from his truth, and their hearts were reborn by the power of love known and felt in his death. And so, with the Christian Church, came a new beginning of world history.

We thus see that Jesus was not merely a teacher. His teaching was a factor in a greater work, that of handling the greatest crisis of the world's religious and moral history. The title of "the Christ", which he accepted, describes such a unique and supreme historic agent, and, far from being, as some have contended, a title with only temporary, accidental, racial significance, which Jesus accepted because something had to be done with it, we see it to be vital to his own understanding of himself and to our understanding of him.

It is strange that theology in dealing with the person of Jesus has practically ignored his two designations of himself, as given in the first three Gospels, "the Son of man" and "the Christ". The reason seems to be that, owing to Greek influence, Christian theologians insisted on defining Jesus in metaphysical terms, whereas Jesus himself insisted that his significance was to be understood from the historic point of view, since

whatever may be the exact meaning of these two terms, they both tell us that the importance of him to whom they are applied is in his historic position and his response to it.

With regard to the term "Son of man" there is some doubt as to the use Jesus made of it. The facts are confusing, and it is impossible to discuss the matter fully except at great length, so that we must here confine ourselves to the chief factors.

We are told in the Gospels that Jesus repeatedly and emphatically foretold the death and resurrection of the Son of man, yet, when the time came, his disciples expected neither his death nor his resurrection. In some sayings the coming of the Son of man is spoken of without qualification as an event understood to be in the future: in others he is spoken of as having already come. In some of the best attested sayings, Jesus in one and the same sentence speaks first of "I" or "me" and then of "the Son of man", implying on the face of it that by "Son of man" he did not mean himself (e.g. Mark viii, 38). Some of his sayings evidently have direct reference to Daniel vii, where the "one like unto a Son of man" is interpreted as standing for "the saints of the Most High" in their reception of the divinely given and truly human kingdom which shall supersede the kingdoms of brute force and where the way into the kingdom is said to be through suffering for "times and a time and half a time", which suggests the "after three days" of Jesus' predictions. In several sayings he is reported to have spoken of the Son of man as coming in the clouds or with the angels, but in each case there are variants where these accompaniments

are absent, and a reference to Daniel vii shows that there the coming of "one like unto a Son of man" "with the clouds of heaven" is contrasted with the coming up of the "four beasts" out of "the sea", evidently in order to contrast Israel's theocracy with its opposite in the brute powers of Israel's conquerors, and without any reference to the end of the world. There is therefore a good deal to suggest that Jesus used the term mainly in the Danielic sense for the saints of God in their reception of the kingdom through suffering: in Mark ix, 11-13, he seems to speak of the sufferings of the Son of man as including those of the Baptist, and in Mark viii, 31-4, the teaching that the Son of man must suffer is made explicit by the statement that the followers of Jesus must suffer; and when he contrasts the Son of man with the foxes and birds, he seems to be speaking, not so much of himself in contrast to other men, as of the essentially human in the costliness of its spiritual quest over against the located and sheltered bird and beast. If this was his use of the term he would naturally apply it specially to himself, but whether he used it, in a way which would not seem natural to us if we were not so used to it, as an equivalent to the first personal pronoun is doubtful, and there is evidence in some cases that this use is due rather to his reporters than to himself (cf. Matt. v, 11 and Luke vi, 22: Mark x, 45 and Luke xxii, 27).

On the other hand, there can be no doubt that not very long after his death one of his titles in the Church was "the Son of man" (Acts vii, 56), and that when the Gospels were written it was taken to be his title for himself. This may have been due to the influence

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of certain Jewish apocalyptic literature, especially the similitudes of Enoch, in which the Son of man is a distinct individual of heavenly origin. There are clear traces of the influence of this book in Matthew in cases where their presence is evidently due rather to editorial modifications than to the language of Jesus (e.g. Matt. xix, 28, as compared with Luke xxii, 29, 30, where Matthew's phrase "the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory" is one of the characteristic phrases of Enoch, e.g. lxii, 5; lxix, 27, 29). And if the Church supposed that Jesus used the term in the Enochian sense, it must also suppose that by it he meant himself, it being not only an individual in "Enoch", but also equivalent to "the Christ" (whereas in Mark viii, 30 ff., Jesus enjoins silence as to his being the Christ, but speaks openly of the Son of man). Facts thus go to show that in this matter the Church's record of what Jesus said was affected by influences which he did not share.

This conclusion is the alternative to that of a recently popular school of New Testament study, the so-called apocalyptic school, who maintain that Jesus came under the influence of the popular belief that the world was speedily to be brought to an end by divine intervention through the appearance from heaven of "the Son of man" (i.e. "the Christ"). Jesus, they maintain, believed that he would be this Son of man, and if he accepted the title of "the Christ", did so only by forecast. This scheme has its own difficulties. It assumes that Jesus was content with second-hand thought on this important point, yet it has to allow that he made unheard-of changes in the popular notion, as that "the Son of man" should spend a preliminary

time of humiliation on earth. If this school of thought is right, then Jesus was wrong in promising his return within the lifetime of those living, and wrong through taking an unspiritual base for his promise. It is difficult to think this, especially as we know from Mark xii, 35-7, that the orthodox view of Jesus' day was not of a Christ of the Enochian type, but of one who should be a descendant of David.

But there is positive evidence that Jesus did not look for a speedy end to the world. Had he done so, surely when he warned men against laying up treasures for themselves, he would have given the transitoriness of the world as a reason: on the contrary he speaks as though he looked for an indefinitely long future in which moth and rust should corrupt and thieves break through and steal. The same indefinite persistence of present conditions is implied in "Ye have the poor always with you".

That he, a man as his disciples believed him to be, accepted from them the title of Messiah, tells us that, in preference to the apocalyptic notion of a superhuman Christ with its cataclysmic concomitants, he went back to the older prophetic idea of a human Christ, potent, not to end history, but to begin it aright. And all that we can reasonably attribute to him of forecast finds sufficient explanation along these lines.

This other term "the Christ" (to which, in the first three Gospels, "the Son of God" is generally a simple equivalent) was the title by which Jesus was satisfied to be known to his closest followers when, at the crisis of his ministry, he turned to go to his death at Jerusalem. It was upon his answer to the adjuration, "Art thou the

Christ?" and it was under the Roman equivalent, "The king of the Jews," that he suffered death. In all probability his baptism and the words, "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased," mark his full and conscious acceptance of Messiahship: otherwise it is difficult to understand the immediately following solitude of the wilderness with its questionings, "If thou art the Son of God . . .," to be itself followed by the public ministry which ended where he heard the gibe, "Let the Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, that we may see and believe." We must recall also his utterances, "Blessed are the eyes that see the things that ye see: for I say unto you, that many prophets and kings desired to see the things that ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things that ye hear, and heard them not" (Luke x, 23, 24; Matt. xiii, 16, 17): "The law and the prophets until John: from that time the kingdom of God . . ." (Luke xvi, 16; Matt. xi, 12, 13): "A greater than Jonah . . . a greater than Solomon . . . is here" (Luke xi, 31, 32; Matt. xii, 41, 42). Unlike the Baptist, he did not speak of a greater one to come. Most significant of all is Matt. xi, 25-7 (Luke x, 21, 22), where Jesus gives thanks that though the religious specialists were blind, there were some who could see; but these were "babes", and upon him came the awful responsibility of unique knowledge of his Father and unique power to impart it.

All this tells us that he looked upon his time as the crisis of the world's history and upon himself as called to deal with it: he knew himself as the culmination of the past and the key to the future. His view of

himself and his calling and relation to God is essentially historic. His acceptance of the title of "the Christ" is his acceptance of a historic interpretation of himself as the true one. It records his desire to be recognized as the culminating point or focus of divine energy in the history of the race.

"The Christ," in the expectation of Israel, was especially he that should overcome the evil of the world, triumphing where all others had failed. Jesus' call apparently came to him through contact with the Baptist's struggle with the evil of his times. He knew himself to be the greater one of whom John spoke, able to do what John could not. The ground of this high calling was in the consciousness of a knowledge of such goodness in God as could effectively overcome evil. In the temptation that showed him all the kingdoms of the world, he rejects, not the desire for world-dominion, but the thought that there is any way to ultimate mastery in God's world but through the all-worshipful goodness of God.

It would seem that from the first Jesus saw that his way would be one of struggle, suffering, and death. The voice at his baptism speaks in the phrase that describes the Suffering Servant of the Lord (Isaiah xlii, 1, etc.). One of the temptations suggests dangerous conclusions with Jerusalem. And no sooner do the disciples confess him the Christ than he begins to speak of suffering and death (Mark viii, 27-31; ix, 7-13).

If we marvel at the daring affirmations of Christian theology about the person of Jesus, it is to be remembered that despite the little part that the title of "the Christ" plays in them, they all find their root in his acceptance

of Messiahship, in the meaning he gave to it and the ground on which he accepted it, as both are evinced in his teaching and action, and especially in his suffering and death. These things created the experience in his followers that expressed itself in the Church's theology. The original daring was his.

That the language and thought of the Church's theologians were different from his was due in large part to Israel's rejection of him and his appeal, which indefinitely postponed the opportunity of the kingdom of God. The Church refused to think that he had not achieved all he intended : it therefore missed part of the significance both of his life and death. More change of thought and language came when Christianity passed from Jewish to Gentile life : Jesus came to be interpreted metaphysically rather than historically, so that his self-chosen title was reduced to a surname, and Jesus the Christ became Jesus Christ.

In particular, with this change of envisagement, one important aspect of the death of Jesus was lost sight of. For, apart from any deeper sense, the laying down of his life in the endeavour to lift Judaism from the national level and to make it a universal boon, means that in simple historic sense he died for us to whom this boon was made available by his death.

We also find here an aspect of his essential uniqueness. If the long period of Jewish segregation in the interests of religion and ethics was justified, it was because in these respects their achievement was higher than that of the other nations of the world, but not yet so high as to make their religion and ethics an invasive, triumphant power rather than a tender plant that needed

protection. But national segregation under these dominant interests would produce persons of higher and higher ethical and religious qualities, standing out as geniuses in the national bent, until the personality should be produced whose religion and ethics would no longer need protection but would have the invasive, triumphant quality. When he appears the justification for segregation is at an end, and if segregation persists in spite of him it will be deflected from the way of vital attainment. So that we have in the only process which could produce such fruit, one which by its very nature, having produced such fruit, cannot do so again. And the process is not repeatable in any other nation, for once a religion and ethics of the truly self-giving, triumphant type are produced in the world, the segregation of a nation in the interests of religion and ethics would have no justification and would therefore not produce wholesome fruit. In this sense, therefore, Jesus is in the very nature of things unique.

(5)

Owing to Israel's rejection of Jesus, early Christianity, reluctant to own that he had in any sense failed, lost sight of much of the significance of Jesus as the pivot of the race's religious history, but it experienced and proclaimed his life and death as the divine power of redemption from sin, won for men by his victory in utmost conflict with evil.

It is not surprising that terms of sacrifice were applied to the death of Jesus. They would come inevitably

to the Jewish mind in thinking of redemption from sin. Assured of the divine origin of blood-sacrifice, they could not transcend its practice unless they could, at least in part, transfer its language and ideas to that which superseded it. So, also, their assurance of the divine origin of legalism made it natural that they should use juridical terms to assure themselves of God's free grace.

The inadequacy of these figures is patent, and was bound up with their very origin, for the language of the lower cannot but be inadequate to the higher. In particular, though they reflect the assurance of forgiveness through Jesus, they say nothing of the experience of new spiritual life through him, without which the experience of pardon is less than valueless, as he showed us in the parable of the unmerciful servant (Matt. xviii, 23-34). But for a time this inadequacy of language was comparatively harmless, for the spiritual experience of the early Church was wider and more vivid than its terms.

We have seen something of the significance of the life of Jesus in the lifting of Judaism into universality by insisting upon the self-givingness of God's love, and something of the power of his death in giving credibility and life to this truth, and in freeing his followers from the influences that withheld them from accepting it. But there is a deeper sense in which his life and death were the turning-point in the conflict of good with evil.

One effect of his death was to draw the lines clearly. His bitterest opponents were the Pharisees, the most highly respected men of the day, and so popular and

influential that without their support the high-priestly party could hardly have compassed his death (Josephus, *Antiquities*, XVIII, i, 4). Even his nearest followers left him to go to his death alone, and at the last supper he sensed their imminent desertion. Judas' treachery seems finally to have made it indubitable that though he was about to lay down his life to move the people, they would not be moved. And in Gethsemane his sorrow unto death marks the depth to which his love was wounded. His prayer, "Remove this cup from me : howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt," expresses the agony of a soul that could not but shrink from facing the fact of evil triumphant in those he loved, and yet, despite the agony of it, must, in loyalty to truth, recognize that his people's refusal had doomed to failure his attempt to win them from evil. Love forbade him to solace himself with the Stoic consolation that others, though they might hurt themselves, could not hurt his soul. And, refused by them, he had no second best with which to comfort himself. Yet he must still go on to his death, for his very followers showed by their flight that, though they had not rejected, they had failed as yet to appropriate what Israel as a whole had refused.

We have little indication as to what was in his mind. As we have seen, his bidding the women who wept as they saw him go to the cross, not to weep for him but for themselves and for their children, shows that his heart was burdened with the doom that his people by rejecting him were drawing upon themselves ; and we can only guess what more he foresaw of the world's loss through Israel's rejection. That his sorrow was

not for himself, or from loss of faith, appears in his final words as recorded by Luke, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." His refusal of the anodyne of wine and myrrh is a refusal to allow anything to come between him and the worst that evil can do. His almost incredible compassion for his executioners found expression in the prayer, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," but this prayer suggests that there were those who had not so much excuse of ignorance, and to whom the forgiving love of his Father had already spoken without response. Most significant of all is the cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The genuineness of this utterance has long been accepted on the consideration that the only conceivable reason for attributing it to Jesus is that it was known to be truly his, a conclusion confirmed by its preservation in the Aramaic. No doubt, it was recorded because it was understood to be a protestation of innocency, but, had an utterance been invented for that purpose, it would not have been one that spoke of being forsaken of God. In view of this difficult element, some have suggested that Jesus recited the whole of the psalm (xxii) of which these words are the beginning and which ends hopefully. But a cry "with a loud voice" does not indicate a long recitation, while, if more than the recorded sentence was uttered, the bystanders could not have thought, or pretended to think, that he was calling Elijah. We can only therefore conclude that in this cry Jesus found expression for the profoundest agony of his soul.

The theology of the past felt no difficulty here. Jesus, it declared, in order that he might save men and

make it possible for the justice of God to remit the penalty of their sin, was himself undergoing it, and the cry represents that reprobation by God which is the sinner's due and which Jesus suffered in their stead : it was for this that he came to die. But the irrelevance of this explanation is obvious as soon as we observe that the cry was " Why . . . ? " which can only mean that, far from his recognizing this experience as an important part of the intention of his life, it came upon him unexpectedly and unintelligibly : he did not know why he should suffer it.

This utterance also makes untenable all explanations of the spiritual agony of Jesus as being undertaken with a purpose and supported by a sure hope of thus achieving that which above all he desired. There was doubtless a purpose and a hope in his undertaking of bodily suffering, but here is a spiritual agony for which he knows not the reason or purpose : it finds voice only in an inconsolable " Why . . . ? "

Nor is this conclusion solely dependent upon the recorded utterance. It lies in the very nature of extreme sorrow. Physical suffering, of course, may be undertaken with a purpose and a hope, which are always a counterpoise to it, and may be so great that bodily pain becomes secondary to spiritual joy. Jesus undoubtedly went to the suffering of the cross with purpose and hope—" to give his life a ransom for many "—but when the time of suffering comes, far from finding him with any spiritual alleviation of physical pain, we find the pain of body overshadowed by a greater spiritual pain—" My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death "—a sorrow which culminates in the cry, " Why hast thou forsaken me ? "

and which brought death much sooner than his executioners expected, so that Pilate marvelled (Mark xv, 44). Do we need any other explanation than that, so far as practically the whole of his people was concerned, the appeal of his suffering and death were now evidently to be in vain? Even his disciples had deserted him. Would they retrieve their desertion? They did so later, but, so far as we can see, their retrieval depended on something in his suffering deeper than the physical. Extreme sorrow of heart cannot, in the very nature of things, be undertaken as a means to good, for just in so far as we are sure that any experience will win that which we desire very dearly, it will bring joy of heart, no matter how the body suffers. To tell us that when Jesus suffered the sorrow unto death in Gethsemane and the dereliction on Golgotha, he was sure that by so doing he would achieve that which above all he desired, is to tell us that which all we know of sorrow makes utterly unintelligible. And this conclusion is confirmed by his utterance, for "Why hast thou forsaken me?" is not the cry of one sure of infinite gain by what he endures.

To be forsaken of God meant primarily to fail, to have one's effort unblest with success, to suffer disaster: this seems to be the main meaning in the psalm cited. And in this respect there is little difficulty: Jesus had not met with success. He had called Israel in God's name and Israel had rejected him. He gave his life to win them, and in his death they derided him. His followers had bent to the influence of his enemies, and had forsaken, denied, betrayed him. And since he believed himself to be the Christ, God's supreme agent

for the world's help, since he looked for no greater one to come who should do what he could not do, since he was conscious of no unfaithfulness to God, it followed that to reject him was to reject God's most effective help, that his failure was God's failure, and therefore that in his failure there was no help for him in God ; so that in this sense he might speak of himself as forsaken of God.

But to be, in any sense in which Jesus could use the words, forsaken of God, must mean more than this, and it is this something more that makes our difficulty ; for faithfulness to God, even when success does not follow (or perhaps in that case all the more), ought, we think, to bring continued and comforting fellowship with God. If Jesus' failure was God's failure, ought not that very experience to have brought its own peculiar sense of fellowship with God ? Yet we are underestimating the terror of these words unless we see in them Jesus' experience of having lost that sense. When he gave himself without reserve to his high calling, he had heard in his heart the words, "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased," but now, at the moment of greatest cost, that sense of fellowship turned to an agony of desolation.

Two factors are here worth considering. A wholesome fellowship with God never exists for its own sake merely. So Jesus taught : love of God has its concomitant in love of man. Fellowship with God is always fellowship in activity or suffering for truth or love's sake, or fellowship in the enjoyment of what is beautiful and noble. The cross made all activity, all enjoyment impossible : nothing was possible but fellowship with God in love of man,

and all whom Jesus loved were thwarting and wounding the love of God.

We know also that when we attempt to do good and succeed, we are sure that God is with us, and we rejoice in it ; but when we attempt good, and do not succeed, we cannot but ask ourselves whether it is not our fault, whether we might not have done more or other. In any case, it is true that the more we love others, and the more we have endeavoured for their good, so much the more their refusal of the good perturbs our fellowship with God. But we have the consolation of being able to cast ourselves as fellow-sinners on the mercy of God, and hope that where we have failed, another by greater faithfulness will succeed. Jesus had not these consolations.

But when we speak about fellowship with God in failure, we need to remember that such a notion was foreign to Hebrew thought. We admit it in matters short of the highest, as, for instance, we might be sure that God was with us in an attempt to save life and also in the sorrow that comes with failure, but it is different when it concerns the highest point of God's chief end. And the very form of the cry, " Why hast thou forsaken me ? " in so far as it tells of Jesus' sense of failure, implies that he could not think of God as defeated. Hence his confusion and sense of forsakenness. He saw love and power divorced, while his whole life and endeavour had been energized by the faith that infinite love and infinite power were one.

The ultimate triumph of God through Jesus came by men's seeing in the suffering of his soul what their sin means to God, and so finding there the measure and assurance of God's love. It seems, therefore, that in the

matter of sin God could triumph only when men knew what their defeat of God's love meant to God. So that if sin is overcome by the sorrow of Jesus, that sorrow must have been in the experience of defeat. And here we must recognize that when we speak of Jesus' fellowship with God in the experience of man's rejection of God's love in him, we are where truth becomes paradox. For to have fellowship with God in this, is to experience the breaking of fellowship between God and man : to feel forsaken of God would seem to be the only way of entering into God's experience of human sin, and therefore, also, the only way to the overcoming of sin. Infinite love and infinite power are one, but love finds its power in weakness : there is no final evidence and measure of love but the measure of its suffering under rejection, and therefore here lies its only way to triumph.

Here we have the supreme instance of what we have seen to be the truth, that God is known in achieved human goodness, and that the goodness of God, thus incarnate in human finitude, has a spiritual power without which God transcendent cannot command the human heart to the utmost. The utter faithfulness of Jesus in defeat, the love that could not enjoy God unless others shared his joy, gave men so to know God that God triumphed in their hearts.

This triumph of the love of God through the suffering of defeat has a necessary condition in the time process as other than the eternal present. It was because triumph could not be foreseen that it came, for triumph foreseen would have made impossible the sorrow that achieved it. So essential is the time process to the triumph of God : the outgoing and self-giving of God in creation

has in Calvary its culmination, its interpretation, and its fulfilment.

We have thus come, along other lines of thought, strangely near to the old affirmation of a God who came down from heaven to suffer the penalty of sin that men might know the forgiving and recreating love of God, but we have it, as the older thought did not have it, together with the affirmation of the simple and true humanity of Jesus, and we have it freed from those accompaniments that, by offending moral sensitiveness and intellectual honesty, diminish both the content and the assurance of what is proffered as the gospel of God.

(6)

We have already touched upon the movement of thought that led to the formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity as we have it in the creeds. The first followers of Jesus were content to call him the Christ, but soon other terms and forms of thought appeared. Paul's experience of the spiritually creative power of Jesus brought the insight and conviction that this power must be one with the power that created the world, and so led him to think of creation through, or in, Christ (Col. i, 13-17). We have the same idea in Hebrews i, 2, and John i, 3. We have seen, also, that in pre-evolutionary thought justice could not be done to the spiritually creative power of Jesus without regarding his life as analogous to the creative act of God as then conceived—a divine intrusion into the course of history.

Christianity soon passed into the Hellenistic world

with its lack of the Hebrew sense of God in history, its antithesis of the immortal, unsuffering divine and the mortal human in an undivine world, its cry for salvation from mortality rather than from sin. The insuperable difficulty of doing justice on this basis to the soul's experience of Jesus appears in the war of thought which found in the great creeds from the Nicene to the Athanasian a truce rather than a peace. Yet these creeds, despite all that may be said in criticism of them, secured the main point—that the divine which men saw in the life and death of Jesus was not an inferior level of divinity, but as essentially divine as the divinity of the Creator and Upholder of the universe.

The whole modern difficulty of the traditional position, both in the unintelligibility of its doctrine of the Trinity and in the confusion and contradictions of its attempt to secure both the humanity and divinity of Jesus, takes its rise from the assumption of the undivineness of the universe and from regarding it as a work of God in which he did not all along put as much of himself as was possible—a point of view incompatible with the thought of Paul and of the authors of the Epistle to the Hebrews and of the opening verses of the Fourth Gospel, whose connection of Christ with creation implies the contrary.

We have seen that it is impossible to understand the affirmations of our deepest personal life as given explicitness and power by Jesus, without the conviction that God created the universe in and by the outgoing and self-giving of his own being and that he is always present and active in it to the very brim of possibility, the only limits being those of the greatness of his

purpose in more complete self-giving. If man's being is thus of the outgoing and self-giving of God, then, if his will is one with God's will, he will be wholly divine, and in a sense more divine than any other being in the universe whether named God or not, for in him the outgoing of God in creation will have come home to God again in oneness of will. That man in whom we find God as nowhere else in the universe is Jesus : in the human freedom of Jesus' will God has the completeness of his own divinity.

The doctrine of the Trinity has its germ and incentive in the religious experience recorded in the New Testament ; it is not surprising, therefore, that, however difficult we may find the form given to it by tradition, the fundamental assertion of this doctrine is still a necessity of thought.

As we saw in the first chapter, all our deepest personal activity, all that is characteristic of our experience of the right and the good, comes to us with the affirmation of a Spirit that speaks with our spirit, so that the right is to us, not only the expression of our own true being, but an absolutely commanding voice that is not merely the voice of ourselves. This inward divine is not all-powerful, for its commands are not always obeyed, yet it speaks with an absoluteness of authority, by virtue of which we cannot but believe this Spirit to be one with the Infinite, the All-powerful Creator. The affirmation of this oneness (which is by no means obvious logically or as deduction from experience) is the first great act of faith. But, as we have seen, this faith becomes our explicit and effective possession only through Jesus, and, as we have also just seen, does, in so doing, bring the

conviction that the whole universe has its being in the outgoing and self-giving of God, is therefore essentially the child of God, not the undivine effect of his will, and finds in Jesus not only the revelation of its true nature but its way back to God through his creative redemption. These three are one, the absolutely commanding Spirit of good, the infinite Power in whose outgoing and self-giving all life has its being, and the Life so begotten of God, the divinity of which we know in Jesus. Each is by itself incomplete : none can be resolved into the other : the three in their distinctness and in their oneness are needed for a true thought of God. " The Catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity."

CHAPTER V

JESUS TO-DAY

(I)

THE place and power of the life and death of Jesus in our faith carries with it, or comes by a very short and sure step of reason to, the assurance that he is "alive for evermore".

One of the absolute affirmations of our moral consciousness is the supreme value of personalities, and the faith implied here finds through Jesus its explicitness in the assurance that personalities are supremely dear to God ; in face of which it is impossible to think that God would not want to maintain them in life after death. While to suggest that he might not be able to do what he would like to do—a suggestion which would be of force as regards secondary values—would in this case imply that the supreme value was without ground in reality ; and it would mean that God used personalities as mere means and tools to an end beyond themselves, which is so indubitably a moral wrong that we dare not think it of him.

The particular help which Jesus gives here is twofold. It may be difficult for me to think that some poor specimen of humanity, such as I am, can be so supremely valuable to God that he will secure its eternal persistence in personal life. But the spirit of Jesus convinces me that to think lightly of any human being is to show that

I do not understand God's way of thinking. And however difficult it may be, when I am considering myself and others like myself, to think that humanity is eternally dear to God, yet when I look upon Jesus I cannot think otherwise : I know that he was dear to God, and was so because he lived in the assurance that all others also were dear to God.

When the Sadducees (Mark xii, 18-27) raised the question of the future life, Jesus' answer is precisely that which is thus forced upon us, except that in him we have a much more persuasive instance than he had in Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob. His argument is based on the existence of a personal relation between God and man. God has revealed himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the sureness of this personal relation between God and man is the burden of all the scriptures. God's seeking of such a relation implies his desire for its persistence, otherwise personalities are being made the means to something less than themselves, and God is God of the dead, not of the living ; so that to question the eternity of God's children is to question the power of God at a point where Jesus finds the question an evidence of spiritual obtuseness. " Is it not for this cause that ye err, that ye know not the scriptures, nor the power of God ? " Jesus bids us found our faith in the hereafter on the reality of a personal relation between God and man, and the argument gains power in all that realizes that relation and especially in the manifold Godward activity that he evokes in us. Those who have experienced in Jesus the focus of God's creative life cannot think of him, or of the humanity whose truth they find in him, as subject to extinction.

Our hope for the hereafter thus depends directly upon our faith in God, and in what the world is to God. Death at the animal level of life is the dissolution of private systems of unification by the powers of the universe, i.e. of the larger system. The minor system can no longer maintain itself as part of the whole : it begins to disturb the harmony. The inclusive whole no longer finds its wholeness served by this minor system, so it pulls the minor system to pieces and redistributes its elements. But if any minor system should become capable of permanent or eternally progressive harmony with the whole, there seems no reason for its dissolution, rather in it the whole is more at one with itself and achieves an enrichment of inward unity. And, on the other hand, if personality comes to its own in traffic with reality, how can we think that reality is its executioner ? These conclusions become inevitable as soon as we try to bring the ethical and spiritual life of man into any intelligible relation with the power that gave him being, and especially when the faith that is implied in his characteristic activities finds its explicitness in Jesus. The human situation has in him its most pointed expression. A universe that could let Jesus cease to be would be too stupid and weak to have produced him. Nor can God be dependent, for his power to make man truly one with him, upon that which cannot maintain itself in his universe.

If Jesus has ceased to be, then God is not what the achieved goodness of Jesus makes us sure God is.

(2)

God alone is to be worshipped : to him alone must I dedicate all I am. But when I would worship God, I find that I am not sure of those things in him that are most worshipful except as I have Jesus in mind. And when I would dedicate my life to God, I find that he has no hands to take the offering but the hands of the man Jesus. Only as I consider Jesus, am I persuaded of a love in God so costly that I am constrained to answer it by the devotion of all my being. Apart from him my worship of God pales and my devotion is hesitating and strained : to me God is not effectively God apart from Jesus.

And this is as it should be. For if the universe is the outgoing of God, then Jesus, in whom that outgoing finds its focus and redemption, can never be left out of any commerce with God in thought or act. He is as necessary to the true knowledge of God by us and to the true action of God upon and in us, as God is necessary to our true understanding of Jesus and to the true effect of his activity upon us. Only in Jesus are we assured that God has the sort of goodness that completely commands us, and only in the story of his life and death has that sort of goodness an adequately moving expression. He is not a fact that, having served its purpose as proof of a general proposition, can now be left on one side. He is continually needed to keep us alive to the form and sureness of his truth of God.

But in making Jesus indispensable to our worship of God, are we not beginning to worship symbols and manifestations of God instead of God himself ?

In the first place, to find Jesus indispensable to our worship of God does not mean that he replaces God for us. Many people, no doubt, pray to Jesus as to God, but apparently Jesus never taught his disciples to do so. It is true that in the R.V. John xiv, 14, reads, "If ye shall ask me anything in my name, that will I do," but this verse is not found in certain important manuscripts and versions, while in others the word "me" is not found. Without this word the verse is redundant: with it, the phrase "in my name" becomes awkward, and the verse, by encouraging prayer in which there is no mention of the Father, seems to ignore the intent expressed in v. 13, "that the Father may be glorified," and itself seems to be ignored by the statement of v. 16, "I will pray the Father," which implies that Jesus himself could not give what was needed. But in any case it is probable that what is said in these chapters about prayer represents rather the practice of the time when they were written than the actual words of Jesus. The thought of the chapters themselves is not homogeneous: xiv, 16, says, "I will pray the Father and he will give you another Comforter," but in xvi, 26, 27, we read, "I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you." And the reiterated emphasis here upon praying in the name of Jesus is in striking contrast to the entire absence of any such injunction from the many instructions as to prayer given in the first three Gospels. In the one prayer which we know Jesus taught his disciples he did not teach them to pray in his name. This is the more significant since in these Gospels he speaks of his disciples doing other things in his name.

The true place of Jesus in our prayer appears if we remember that to think of God and Jesus apart is to wrong both. To think of God truly in prayer needs that Jesus should be remembered both in what we ask and in what we look for in the way of God's response. The poetic utterance natural to prayer, in which Christian fervour speaks in invocation and adoration of its Master, has its spiritual warrant and tacit safeguards. But, nevertheless, to substitute Jesus for God in prayer has two real dangers : we are apt to forget that Jesus is man, and so to miss his power to interpret God ; and we are apt to regard him as kinder than God and more likely to help, and in so doing we wrong God. The common practice of teaching children to pray to Jesus rather than to God is doubtless in part responsible for subsequent lapse or confusion of faith.

It must, of course, be recognized that idolatry is a continual danger, arising from the very nature of worship. To try to think of God in himself, apart from his outgoing in creation and history and his relation to man, is clearly inadequate and misleading, and we need first of all to beware of the idolatry of worshipping an abstract idea in place of God. When we come from active contact with the world to prayer or meditation we ought not to leave the world out of count. The God of my adoration and meditation is not my Father only but our Father, he is Lord not of heaven only but of earth, not of the soul only but of the body ; and my prayer and meditation must recognize the compass of his fatherhood and lordship, otherwise my religion will be a garbling of life and will be out of touch with its realities and activities.

But in this attempt to avoid an abstract notion of God our worship is very apt to centralize itself upon something in the circumference of his glory, upon some partial, inadequate representation, so that we take as all-worshipful that which is not so. Creed or Bible or Church can be given such undue importance in our worship as to shift the true centre of its gravity in a way that amounts to idolatry. It is even possible to make an idol of Jesus, but this seldom happens except when we have allowed a wrong use of Creed or Bible or Church to dehumanize him. The harm of idolatry is that it stands between us and our greatest thought of God and offers us a worship on cheaper terms. It is the striking property of any simple envisagement of Jesus that he does the opposite of this. The more we consider him in the simplicity of his manhood and in the greatness of his historic significance, the more we shall find that he holds our attention upon God. In fact, it is in Jesus that we find our chief security against idolatry, as is hinted in the words, "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding . . . My little children, guard yourselves from idols" (1 John v, 20, 21). For we can worship truly only as we know God, and we cannot know him truly apart from his creative outgoing; but all forms of being are apt to speak partially and misleadingly of him, or to attract our mind from the creator to the creature, except Jesus only, in whom God's creative outgoing finds its interpretation, who shows us the relation of all things to God, and thus centralizes our experience and fixes its centre in God; for to think of him is to find God in him supremely worshipful. God can be supreme to us

only when we think of him together with all that to which he is supreme, and it is only in Jesus that we find a concentration of all experience that commands our whole-hearted worship of God. But this power of Jesus to interpret our experience in God and God in our experience is not confined to our worship.

(3)

Jesus is often spoken of as the ideal man, but though in some ways useful and just, the term may easily be used of him in a way that is misleading. There is a sense in which one man cannot exemplify the ideal for all men, because an essential part of goodness is that it is as manifold as the situations of life. Mother, father, teacher, farmer, handworker, shop-keeper, doctor, must each have different ideals. And what a man calls his ideal is generally an imaginary picture, much of which is without moral imperative for him, its office being rather to enlist the imagination on the side of the moral imperative.

So that although we find in Jesus the uniquely complete embodiment of that spirit which the moral imperative enjoins upon us, yet we must remember that his situation called for action in many ways different from that which ours demands of us. Jesus does not therefore offer himself to us as the copy to which we have to conform our acts, so much as the revealer of the true spirit of life and the giver of the faith by which we can grow into our own true shape. He rather evokes than prescribes. And this is the way of all goodness :

a famous man may set a fashion : a good man does not move us to imitation so much as to be ourselves, and what he is gives us faith to be what we may. And here lies the need of to-day, for behind the pressure of particular ethical problems lies the greater need of confidence of spirit, without which we have neither base nor courage to deal with particular issues.

Those to whom Jesus has been most, have found in him very much more than one whom they should copy : in him they have found themselves, or rather he has found in them the self they had not yet found. Thus we have Paul speaking of being "in Christ", of "Christ in me", and declaring, "for me to live is Christ." This has been called the mysticism of Paul : he himself would probably have rather called it his philosophy, "Christ the wisdom of God," which he set over against Greek wisdom (1 Cor. i, 22, 24). Mystical experiences, he tells us, he had (2 Cor. xii, 4), in which he heard "unspeakable words", an expression which suggests that they added nothing to what he had to teach men of Christ. What we know of Paul's experience of Jesus is enough to account for his characteristic terms. Christ crucified discovered in Paul something deeper than he had yet been aware of, called a response from the yet unknown centre of his being, and from that centre reorganized and energized his whole self. On the other hand, Christ crucified brought to Paul a new conviction as to the character of God, in whom he lived and moved and had his being, and from this side, too, made Paul know himself anew, as the object of hitherto unknown or disregarded divine powers now recreating him in their own likeness, so that Paul's experience was that

“ if any man is in Christ, he is a new creation ”. Christ was thus to Paul the ultimate truth of his whole environment, physical and spiritual, and the ultimate truth of his own soul, so that to be “ in Christ ”, to know “ Christ in me ”, was no more than the simple, intelligible expression of the fundamental Christian experience.

In considering more closely what the truth of God in Jesus does in the human self, we have already (pp. 38 ff.) seen something of its overcoming of the inward confusion and conflict arising both from the memory of wrong things done and from the knowledge that we are ourselves still wrong. The memory of wrong things done by me and the consciousness of what I still am, tell me that I have frustrated the will of God and antagonized him, and still do so ; I have made these things part of my being, and (apart from Christ) my only course is either to live superficially, lying to myself about myself and God, or to be hopeless about myself. But the life and death of Jesus convince me that true goodness, and therefore the goodness of God, finds its highest in a love that is not cancelled by ingratitude and evil, but still loves, despite the pain that love now brings ; and this pain becomes the most pointed and powerful evidence of such love. So that when I now look back upon a wrong thing done by me, the outstanding thing about it is that it wronged and pained God’s love, which at once reminds me of the pardoning and redeeming greatness of that love ; so that the very memory of my sin, now increasedlly hateful, binds me closer to God, and the consciousness that I am still a sinner keeps me, in humility, continually sensitive to

the power of the love which my sinfulness cannot cancel and which is my hope for its overcoming.

The sense of sin, converted into a humility that welcomes and rejoices in a God so great as to accept pain rather than diminish love, should bring a continually deepening experience of joy and peace. But this growth in joy has been stunted by the long-continued stress upon eternal torment as the most important aspect of sin, and upon release from this prospect as the chief effect of God's pardon. When the assurance of release is reached, the transition from intense fear to a secure forecast of bliss floods the soul to overflowing with peace and joy; but when the experience of this transition fades into a memory, the intensity of joy fades also, and in the nature of things life has no such transition to offer again: nothing can reinstate the thrill of the moment of deliverance. And as life passes on, the comparison of great past joy with present little joy lessens the present joy still further, and the cry goes up, "Where is the blessedness I knew, when first I saw the Lord?" The fear of hell may be effective in precipitating a crisis, but it does so at the cost of heavily discounting the future joy of the spiritual life.

It becomes clear that if the truth of sin is that it frustrates God's will and pains his love, then a true sense of sin can hardly begin until God's love has been given its first mastery in our hearts. In 1 John i, 5-7, walking in the light and having fellowship with God through Christ are spoken of as the condition in which "the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin".

In this experience we get freedom from the frequent cause of repressions and inward conflicts—the reluctance

to face the truth about ourselves. When we seek satisfaction in the contemplation, not of our own goodness, but of God's, when the recognition of our own shortcoming brings with it the assurance of God's infinite love for us, then we can be honest with ourselves, and at the same time hopeful about ourselves. We are thus also released from the otherwise chronic itch for the establishment of our own superiority, which makes us unsimple and often ridiculous in our ways with our fellows, and fills our minds either with foolish fictions of our genius and heroism, or with turmoil of indignation because we fancy ourselves slighted. And, as already noted (p. 39), we discover that much of what we thought a burdensome sense of sin, was nothing but annoyed vanity, from which we are now freed.

The general effect of the truth of God in Jesus is an increasing inward unity of the self, generated by a humble acceptance of, and a passionate devotion to, the greater goodness of God, and evincing an effective activity and quiet joy, with power to subsume and employ physical and material conditions, even when in themselves adverse. Jesus not only overcomes the evil in us, but becomes a divine centre of interest, one that enhances all other wholesome interests and crowns them with one greater still.

Of course, the many instincts, impulses, and passions, which life in its long adventure and struggle has made part of itself and has handed on to us, are not soon or easily brought into harmony with each other : otherwise the resultant unity would be of little worth. These tendencies are the raw material, and from the greatness of their native strength and diversity comes the

possibility of a powerful and rich unity of personality. And because we are dealing with life, success is rather in process of unification than in achieved unity.

The war between our instincts and our ideals resolves itself into a federation, strained at times, no doubt, but ever moving to deeper unity. We no longer look upon the body and our natural instincts as enemies of the divine ; for we see these things as essential elements in the process that culminated in Jesus. In him we see the body with all its instincts necessary to the consummate revelation of the divine and to the effectiveness of the divine in man. This is, of course, the very opposite of giving every instinct free indulgence : it involves conflict, but conflict in the open, with promise of victory. For in Jesus we have two things—a supreme and all-inclusive interest, our loyalty to which may be revived as often as we will, by turning our minds to him, an interest as wide as the circumference of God's creation and as definite as the personality of Jesus ; and we have an appeal in Christ crucified too strong for any rebellious instinct, since, apart from its spiritual power, it meets and masters them on their own instinctive level.

The other side of the power to bring inward harmony to the self is the power so to move the human heart that it becomes self-forgetful. And perhaps the most startling effect of Jesus upon mankind has been his power to evoke a passion of self-giving. Where other outlets are lacking it may show itself in asceticism, but characteristically it evinces a joyful giving of the most costly service to mankind.

This brings us to see that we find the truth of ourselves only in that which transcends self-contemplation.

When we look at ourselves, either to praise or to blame, we are missing the best part of ourselves. Until we know God in Jesus, we have no sure basis for self-judgment ; but when we do know God in Jesus we have one whom we love more than ourselves, so that this love becomes the most important part of self, and we know ourselves most truly, not by introspection, but when our hearts are by Jesus turned Godward ; and the truth of self so known is an endless possibility of the divine life in ours—" Our life is hid with Christ in God."

The whole of this section finds many-sided illustration throughout the New Testament. Everywhere we find the experience that faith in Jesus resulted in the effective evoking of the divine in man's conscious life, showing itself in a revolutionary accession of joy and inward power. We have here the dominant part accorded to the Spirit in the letters of Paul. *Acts* assumes that a special experience of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit should follow baptism into the name of Jesus. The Fourth Gospel regards the presence of the Spirit with men as depending upon the death of Jesus—" If I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you " (xvi, 7) : " The Spirit was not yet (given), because Jesus was not yet glorified " (vii, 39).

This increased activity and power of personal life was not confined to the conscious. And as might be expected, there was a tendency in some quarters to exaggerate the value (1 Cor. xiv, 5-19) of such phenomena as " speaking with tongues ", i.e. the expression of religious emotion in vocables unintelligible grammatically but capable of suggesting their objects to those gifted with the power to " interpret " (1 Cor. xiv, 1-33). But there is also

record of other and more valuable effects in the sub-conscious, to the present significance of which we must now turn.

(4)

The bringing of personality to an inward harmony is complicated by our mental constitution. Modern psychology has shown us that alongside the conscious workings of the mind are unconscious workings, and that these two modes of working can either be in wholesome co-operation or in disastrous conflict. The working of our unconscious mind can be made unwholesome by the wrong working of our conscious mind, by our repressing and refusing to recognize tendencies or experiences that ought to be part of our conscious life, and so driving them into the unconscious mind, where they continue in active existence seeking for expression and outlet, and finding it in dreams and in other strange and sometimes alarming ways. In acute cases the expression may be, not in dreams, but in visions and auditions, and these are by no means always mere madness, but may, as many religious biographies show, be the way to sane and effective life. In such cases they are the vindication of the good and true, which the conscious mind has shirked or suppressed, but the unconscious has acknowledged, and which thus finds a way to expression.

The unconscious mind and the treatment of its pathology we must leave to the psychologist and psychiatrist, but we are concerned with the fact that bad working between the conscious and unconscious

depends in great part, if not entirely, upon the wrong use of conscious experience ; and the cause of this wrong use generally is that the consciously accepted system of thought and values by which we live is inadequate to whole content of conscious life. We create revolt in the unconscious by doing injustice to the less conscious.

Growth towards inward unity therefore needs some means by which the less regarded fringe of experience shall be vindicated, and the central, consciously accepted system of thought and conduct be made more and more adequate to life. This is difficult because conscious initiative lies with the focus of consciousness, which is committed to the very system that needs altering ; but it may be effected by strong emotional stimulation attached to items of experience hitherto relegated to the fringe of interest, and it is especially possible through our fellowship with another. To sympathize beyond our understanding is the way to enlarge our understanding, especially when we have contact with someone, the centres of whose conscious life are in better touch with life's realities than our own. Thus even a Wordsworth can record his debt :—

“ She gave me eyes, she gave me ears ;
And humble cares, and delicate fears.”

Now one of the most marked effects of the contemplation of Jesus and of God in him is that we are continually driven to enlarge our sympathies, to break up our systems of thought and conduct, and to reshape them on a more adequate basis. No man can think of Jesus without feeling the command of hitherto unrecognized duties, as for instance to give further way

and act to sympathies hitherto restricted by narrow ideas of class, race, or family. The effects of this power are written broadly over history—in Paul's breaking of the barrier between Jew and Gentile, in the Franciscan care of the leper, in the enfranchisement of the slave, and in many other ways. To-day it is threatening class barriers and economic pressures.

Jesus' vindication of those things in our constitution and experience to which we have not ourselves done justice is what we ought to expect if our whole being is from God and of God and if Jesus represents the truth of God's being and will. It is indeed essential to the completeness and validity of his lordship. For to think that we assert the lordship of Jesus by attributing to him powers otherwise attributed to God only is to undervalue him : the true lordship of Jesus is his power to make God's will effective in a way in which it is not otherwise effective, so that we know him as " the power of God ". This, of course, is most obvious in his unique power of evoking the voluntary response of the human heart, in which God has no other means so effective. But if his lordship was limited to the conscious appreciation and voluntary response of man, it would be lacking in two respects. Beyond the conscious and volitional centre human personality has wide and most important regions of the subconscious and unconscious, so that if the lordship of Jesus was limited to the evoking of voluntary response, it would leave man only half-saved. And since the conscious and voluntary are not the whole man and may misrepresent him, their acknowledgment of Jesus' lordship is not enough to give him an unquestionable title. It is therefore precisely in the

regions of personality beyond the self's conscious system of thought and act that the final vindication of his lordship must be found ; for power there means that his lordship over the conscious, voluntary self finds its warrant in the very constitution of the self as a whole, and therefore also in the constitution of the universe that produced the self. His power over our inmost consciousness, together with his power over the less conscious reaches of our being, evinces him as the truth of life and of all that lies behind life. His spiritual power grows from the very roots of the universe. And the deep-rootedness of his lordship finds its most striking evidences in those cases in which it is effective against conscious opposition so strong that the vindication of its truth must be by vision or audition.

The importance of this aspect of the power of Jesus may be illustrated by the part played by vision and audition in the development of Hebrew religion.

When the prophets said, " Thus saith the Lord . . .," they evidently meant something more than we mean by the dictates of conscience. There was a much more emphatic element of otherness, a sense of something that came to them from what they did not recognize as themselves. " The lion hath roared, who will not fear ? The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy ? " (Amos iii, 8). There can be little doubt that when the prophet said, " Thus saith the Lord," if we do not have to do with definite auditions, the message at least came unbidden into the prophet's mind, not as the result of cogitation, but as though put there by God, so that he would hardly be able to distinguish it from words actually heard as auditions.

How are we to understand this? If we say that we have here a special divine intervention either in the vibrations of the air or the cells of the prophet's brain, we are met with the difficulty as to why God spoke thus to so few men, and why, in any case, he did not, in such important matters, adhere to his own rule of credibility ("at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall a matter be established") and speak so that more than one at once could hear and testify. But always the true prophet speaks alone.

The alternative is the explanation suggested by modern psychology, that we have here a case of something suppressed finding its vindication through voice or vision. The prophet was a man of unusual moral and spiritual sensitiveness, and as such would feel deeply both the prestige of recognized right and also its deficiencies. He will be moved by allowed or condoned wrongs, but will say to himself, "Who am I, that I should claim to be better than my fathers?" And so he will repress his indignation, and refuse to recognize the new idea of right struggling to be born. And if this conflict culminates in a vision or audition in which the suppressed demand of his conscience comes as a word of the Lord, then his modesty is out of court—"The Lord hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" The spiritual significance of these psychological conditions is that now the new truth approves itself by its command of the whole man. The diffidence of conscience is overcome by the voice that speaks from, and for, the deeper bases of his being, and is therefore rightly recognized as the voice of his Maker.

But, it may be objected, hallucinations may come in

this way. That is precisely what the prophets recognized. The false prophet was not regarded as a man who pretended to have visions or auditions which he did have, but as a man whose visions or auditions were not from the Lord. What was the test? Apparently consonance with life, judged at first by ability to predict and later by the power of the new truth to bring greater freedom and compass to the conscious life of which it was now part, to deepen its integrity and its sureness of God.

It accords with this view of their nature that in the New Testament the purport of visions and auditions is generally found running counter to the direction of conscious thought, while we can often find hints of the disregarded or suppressed experience which thus made itself felt.

Peter's vision of the sheet (Acts x, 9-16) was not the creation of his conscious mind since it came with the suggestion of what was unacceptable to him; but his memory of the saying, "There is nothing from without the man, that going into him can defile him," had probably been recently stirred by the trial of Stephen (Acts vi, 14). When Paul was at Corinth "in weakness and fear and much trembling" (1 Cor. ii, 3) "the Lord said unto Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid to speak, and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee: for I have much people in this city" (Acts xviii, 9 f.).¹

¹ It is interesting to compare this and other similar apostolic experiences with the following passage from *The Chronicle of the London Missionary Society*, August, 1932, p. 178: One evening recently, as I (Mr. Hickling) was going up the Bellary road, there were several men in the village gate of Honnenhalli and I stopped

Especially interesting in this respect is Acts xvi, 6-10. Paul's conscious intent is first to "speak the word in Asia", then in Bithynia, but he cannot feel that the Spirit intends either to be done; then at Troas "a vision appeared to Paul in the night; there was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us". Paul rightly takes this to be the call of God, though it was probably also the urge of his own far-reaching spirit which, while it was unvisioned, he felt not to be warrant enough for action. Clearer still are the factors in "the heavenly vision" which Paul saw on the road to Damascus, whither he was going to persecute the followers of Jesus. Modern psychology is in all probability right in seeing here the triumph of a repressed recognition of Jesus. Despite the Pharisee's scorn and horror of a crucified Messiah, the larger man of him responded to what he had come to know of Jesus: that which was more than the Pharisee in him was moved irresistibly by the appeal of one who could evoke such loyalty as he saw in those he persecuted.

Paul spoke of the appearance of the risen Jesus to him as a "vision" (Acts xxvi, 19), which agrees with what he wrote of it, "It was the good pleasure of God

to speak to them. One of them was a Muslim, and he at once took the lead in the talk. What he said shows the wonderful way in which the Person of our Lord becomes real to the imagination of those who come to the hospital. He said: "I know about Jesus, I have seen Him. I had to go to the hospital suddenly, and Dr. Rajaratnam looked very dubious about what was going to happen. Next morning, as I was lying wide awake, a very great and gracious person came to my bedside and said: 'Latif, don't be afraid! You are going to get better in a few days.' There is no doubt whatever in my mind that it was Jesus Himself. I saw Him as clearly as I see you now. Less than three weeks afterwards I came home well."

. . . to reveal his Son in me " (Gal. i, 15, 16), and in 1 Cor. xv, 1-8, he speaks of this experience alongside that of all the other resurrection appearances as though they were all of the same sort. There is strong reason to conclude that what this suggests should be accepted as a correct account of the matter, while, understood in this way, it has, as we have seen, more significance for the effective lordship of Jesus than if understood as a miraculous sign of the sort that he counted both undesirable (Mark viii, 12) and ineffectual (Luke xvi, 31). Nor did Paul himself regard the resurrection as a sign necessary to establish the lordship of Jesus, as may be seen from 1 Cor. i, 22-4, where over against the Jews' demand for signs, he says nothing of the resurrection, but offers " Christ crucified " as " the power of God and the wisdom of God ".

There can be no doubt that Paul's evidence is by far the earliest and best that we have on the matter. In the First Epistle to the Corinthians we have a document at least ten years earlier than our earliest Gospel, Mark. A year or two after the crucifixion Paul had examined the followers of Jesus, and the facts of the resurrection as understood by them must in this way have become known to him. Three years after this he was with Peter and James the Lord's brother in Jerusalem : and he was after that in continual direct or indirect contact with those who were responsible for the earliest and most authentic account of Jesus, and here (1 Cor. xv, 3 ff.) he hands on what he had received from them ; and what he hands on has nothing to say about the empty tomb, and ranks the resurrection experiences of Peter and the rest with his own. The

course of his argument confirms what this suggests. Throughout the chapter he argues from Jesus' resurrection to ours, and without any suggestion that he is passing from this position, he comes to particulars as to the nature of the risen body compared with the buried body, and writes, "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be . . . but God giveth it a body as it pleased him," the very figure being that which he has just applied to Jesus, "the firstfruits of them that are asleep." He goes on, still to all appearances writing both of Jesus and his readers, "It is sown in corruption ; it is raised in incorruption . . . It is sown a natural body ; it is raised a spiritual body." He concludes this part of his argument with the emphatic utterance, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," and it is hardly possible that he can have so written if he believed that the true tradition of the matter was represented by such an account as that of Luke, who is emphatic that the risen body of Jesus was a body of "flesh and bones" which was "carried up into heaven". The whole of 1 Cor. xv makes it evident that Paul believed that, in our case as in that of Jesus, the body raised was not the body that was buried, but a spiritual body given by God.

It seems, therefore, that from the time when Paul received from Peter and his fellow apostles what he delivered to his Corinthian converts until the time when he wrote his first epistle to them, neither the empty tomb nor the resurrection of the buried body was part of the Church's witness. And it is thus very significant that in the earliest mention of the empty

tomb, in the Gospel according to Mark, written, so tradition tells us, after the death of Peter, and evidently ten or fifteen years after the Corinthian letter, we are told in the words with which the true text of Mark ends, that the women who found the tomb empty "said nothing to any one ; for they were afraid ". This strange statement that the women kept silence (explicitly contradicted by all the later évangélistes) would be explained if, now for the first time, something was being added to the generally accepted tradition of the Church, and it was necessary to say why it had not been heard of before. This, of course, does not mean that the story that certain women found the tomb empty was fabricated, but that it had persisted as an obscure and disregarded memory until the generation of eye-witnesses had gone and thoughts regarding the resurrection of Jesus were undergoing a development. One very obvious sign of this change is Luke's entire disregard of the earlier tradition of appearances in Galilee : he not only confines them to Jerusalem, but his story (as supplemented in Acts) gives us to understand that the eleven did not leave Jerusalem at all till after Pentecost. Beyond the statement that the tomb was found empty, there is hardly a point in which the évangélistes do not contradict each other,¹ a phenomenon

¹ We have seen that Luke has only appearances at Jerusalem, and so tells his story (in the Gospel and Acts) as to rule out the Galilean appearances, which are recounted by Matthew as having taken place by the express appointment of Jesus, in part of which at least Matthew was relying on Mark, whose report of what the angel said (Mark xvi, 6) is very strangely handled by Luke (xxiv, 6). And also whereas Matthew says that the women who went to the tomb saw Jesus, Luke (xxiv, 24) says that they did not. John has an appearance in Galilee (xxi) : Luke tells what is evidently the

which indicates that the emergence of this statement was part of a rapid development of tradition, which now insisted that the body that was raised was the body that was buried, and was not only a body of flesh and bones (Luke xxiv, 39), but one that demanded food (Luke xxiv, 41-3 ; Acts x, 41). So that our choice lies between this late, difficult, and unspiritual development and Paul's testimony with its great spiritual significance as psychologically interpreted.

It used to be argued that the resurrection appearances could not have been of the nature of vision because the disciples were expecting nothing of the sort, it being taken for granted that visions were created by conscious expectation. Apart from the wrong thus done to the visions and auditions that play so large a part in the Old and New Testaments, the theory is now known to be mistaken. Observation tells us that vision generally runs counter to conscious expectation, and is, as we have seen, the result of conflict between the more and the less conscious regions of the mind, being in wholesome cases the vindication of what conscious thinking

same story in connection with Peter's call (v, 1-11). According to both Paul and Luke, Jesus' first appearance was to Peter : in John (xx, 19 ; xxi, 14) his first appearance is to the ten.

The Fourth Gospel has its own difficulties. In xx, 17, Jesus tells Mary that he may not be touched : in xx, 27, he invites Thomas to handle him. In xx, 21-3, Jesus commissions and empowers his disciples to continue his work : in xxi we find seven of them back at the trade of fishermen. xxi, 15 ff., tells of the restoration and commission of Peter after that he with the others has been already fully commissioned in xx, 21-3. It would seem that xx, 19-31, has been inserted into an older tradition in which the story of xxi followed immediately upon that of Mary's encounter and gave the first appearance of Jesus to the disciples, a sequence preserved in the very ancient Gospel of Peter.

inadequate to reality has wrongly suppressed. And it will be found that the resurrection appearances interpreted as vision are of greater and more indubitable significance than on any other hypothesis.

By the accepted Jewish channels of divine truth the apostles held that a crucified man was accursed of God and certainly could not be the Messiah. But their love of him, their earlier confession of his Messiahship, their sorrow at his death, their remorse at having abandoned him, all these strained agonizingly against the conclusion to which their scriptures compelled them. Nothing could relieve the situation for them but some event that should rebut the Mosaic objection with as indubitably divine an affirmation. And this the resurrection appearances did : they gave assurance that, despite the crucifixion, God had set his seal to the Messiahship of Jesus, and thus the goodness of Jesus, especially in his suffering and death, became the measure and pledge of God's love, and God, thus known in Jesus, became powerful in them as not hitherto. The resurrection appearances convinced them of the lordship of Jesus : he was at God's right hand, i.e. God's supreme power in the heart of man was through him.

And if we understand these experiences as vision, as the truth that came with the entirely self-giving love of Jesus laying hold of the whole man and triumphing over the strongly held Jewish system of thought which forbade them to regard a crucified man as God's Messiah, then, as we have seen, they become the most complete and strongest vindication of his lordship. The power with which his life and death convince us of God and bring his truth to bear upon our whole being is so

consonant with the needs and conditions of our human nature as grounded in the nature of the universe, that it can overcome the strongest self-committal to less adequate thought about God and man, and thus vindicates him not merely as alive for evermore but as Lord of all.

And since, on this interpretation more than on any other, the resurrection appearances are seen to be a convincing declaration and exercise of the inward lordship that Jesus desired, and thus to express most adequately what he desired to be to his followers, they will also be seen, thus interpreted, to give a more adequate expression of his real spiritual presence with his followers than any interpretation of these appearances that insists upon their being external phenomena of a material or quasi-material sort. Unless we insist that what is real must be spatial, it is difficult to see what more or better we could ask for than we have with the interpretation here adopted.

But whatever may be the best explanation of the resurrection appearances, the fact remains that the power of Jesus upon the less conscious and less regarded reaches of the self is of utmost importance. Our understanding, acceptance, and application of the truth of Jesus will always need enlargement and betterment, and this will come not only by intensity of conscious thought, but also by seeking opportunity for the power of Jesus to work on, and through, the not yet systematized margin of our being. An essential part of all prayer should be the putting of our whole being at the disposal of God as we know him in Jesus. And a part of this should be the setting of ourselves to wait quietly and passively

for that which the spirit of Jesus will call up from the less conscious regions of the mind. But it must be remembered that the passivity is never entire : the mind must be turned Christwards, and the effect of that direction upon the otherwise passive mind will depend on the knowledge of him which has come through conscious channels. It is by what we know of his spirit that we must judge whether what, in these moments of passivity, comes into consciousness is to be taken as the working of his truth or of other factors which we know to be active in the subliminal mind.

These cautions are the more needful because, though there is a great truth in the common statement that the power that made the Church was the living and triumphant Christ in its midst, this truth is not infrequently overstressed to the extent of depreciating, or suggesting that we can dispense with, the history of Jesus of Nazareth, and of implying that the Church has got beyond the need of faith as its one hold upon God. The central act of the early Church's worship was an act of commemoration, " This do in remembrance of me " ; while the prayer " that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith " (Eph. iii, 17) tells us that they knew of no experience of him to which faith was not essential.

Certain of these issues are raised in an acute form by the many Christians who recount occasions in which they experienced the personal presence, close to them, of Jesus Christ. It is perhaps difficult for any one, like myself, who has never had such an experience, to do justice to it, but not more difficult than to see in it a coming of the personal Jesus by act of his will into

special proximity with this or that person. If it is a divinely granted privilege, then, since Jesus will come where he is most needed, it must be a privilege of need rather than of sanctity ; and if so, why should I not have it, since my need is obviously greater than that of the many saints who claim to have had it ?

We have also to ask how these experiences differ from the apprehension of the presence of the divine recorded by the mystics of all ages. If the presence is apprehended as essentially divine, how is it distinguished from the presence of God ? How is it that these experiences never record utterances of Jesus that can be recognized as of the same stamp as the Sermon on the Mount or the parables ? Is the experience different, or differently authentic, from that of those who say they have been aware of the presence of dead friends ? If it is not a human presence that is experienced, how is it recognized as that of Jesus, whom we know through human characteristics ? If he is apprehended as a human presence, can he be thought of as simultaneously present to more than one ?

Certain limitations of contact are essential to human personality : to attend worthily to any person is to focus our attention upon him, and human personality cannot have more than one such focus at a time. A crowd can be talked to as one, but in conversation with a few, the attention passes from one to the other, or is unmannerly. The mind that can give adequate, separate, and simultaneous attention to more than one person is not human. If it is normally possible for Christian individuals to have the personal attention of Jesus, then it is the attention of one who is a quite different sort of

being from the Nazarene of the Gospels ; and if so, how do we know it is he ?

I therefore find myself compelled to explain these experiences also by the suggestions adopted in the earlier part of this section. The truth of Jesus stirs the margin of my experience which I have not yet adequately appropriated, and compels me to modify and enlarge the conscious system of thought and conduct by which I have hitherto lived. It thus creates a movement in the outskirts of my personality which acts upon my more central and conscious life, and therefore comes to it with a certain element of otherness, which may be very marked. And in the moments of my meditation, in which this has its best opportunity, my conscious self envisages the whole of all that it stands over against as finding meaning and reality in God, whom I know truly only in Jesus ; so that the reaction upon me of all that is not my most conscious self, is in quality and power inseparable from the dominating influence and interpretative power of Jesus.

Now if an experience such as this should in someone of different mental constitution come as, or with, a vivid sense of the presence of Christ, the difference would not be very great. There is for him a gain in vividness, an engagement of the imagination, which I have not ; but there is also a disadvantage in the comparative rareness and uncontrollableness of the distinctive element in his experience, and in the fact that commonly it marks the beginning of the spiritual life and grows rarer as years go by. Otherwise the difference may be put thus : he apprehends the presence of Christ as an item of his environment interpreting

the whole and making vivid the divine reality in the whole : I apprehend the whole and its divine reality as interpreted and focussed in Jesus. There would doubtless be a loss to Christian experience if there were not both these types.

The difference probably turns on the different way in which, in different people, the conscious and sub-conscious elements of the mind work together, a difference observable in what writers have told us of their work, some working by conscious creation and elaboration and others having what they write "given to them", so that the conscious part of the mind has little more to do than to attend to the writing down of what they see acted before the mind's eye.

In both cases, as in the case of the resurrection appearances, just in so far as these experiences may be taken to express what Jesus would desire to be to us, they must be taken as experiences of his real spiritual presence, the almost physical sense of his nearness in the one case being a striking concomitant but not an essential condition of the presence that is with us "all the days" (Matt. xxviii, 20, R.V. margin) and not only on the day of extraordinary experience.

It is necessary in this connection to emphasize the cautions already suggested. There is a danger that a man may come to find his assurance of God in such experiences of a presence, and may come to regard faith as a less sure way, with the result that, when these experiences have become a receding memory, he is left with nothing but a depreciated faith.

There is also the danger that the present Christ may be enjoyed in forgetfulness of the historic Jesus, and

the forgetting of the past in the enjoyment of the present is the commonest cause of personal treachery. To let our experience of the living Christ get loose from the historic Jesus will result in our mistaking our own subconscious tendencies for the leading of his spirit. Paul knew the present Christ as much as any of his day or since, but when Paul has his back to the wall, he "determines to know nothing among" men "save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor. ii, 2).

And in all this region of thought and experience we must be on our guard against misinterpreting the present Christ into meaning that Jesus in the invisible is not still a man; for it is precisely as a man that we need him there: God himself has ubiquity. The human goodness of Jesus, in which the goodness of God becomes known and effective, is, as we have seen, bound up with limitations essential to humanity and to human relations to God. Without these limitations a certain quality of goodness would be lacking—loyalty, courage, heroism, self-sacrifice, including all that makes the physical suffering and spiritual anguish of Jesus' death the supreme revelation and act of saving goodness. So that if we suppose that Jesus has now resigned these limitations as not essential to his being, our thought is immeasurably the poorer. Heaven loses disastrously, if the incarnation of God in man was only a passing phase of divine life.

(5)

It is nowadays generally recognized that in the Gospels we do not get an impartial and uncoloured

record. They were written by men who believed in Jesus, and who, because they believed, wrote to win the belief of others. We have in them the personality of Jesus as reflected in minds and hearts that had been changed by him, and as depicted by them in order that other minds and hearts should be similarly changed. The Gospels are transmitted life, giving an account of its origin in order that it may further transmit itself. And, as we have seen, the peculiar quality in the life of Jesus that made it transmissible—its invasive, unstinted, all-costly love—also secured the authenticity of its record, when the process of transmission demanded it.

This propagated life has continued through the centuries, and its wholesomeness has generally been in proportion to the intimacy of its contact with its earliest record. So we not only have the record in our hands, but stand in the succession of the transmitted life. There are few Christians to-day who do not confess the debt of their faith to infection from one or more of God's indubitable children. To say that Christianity is a historic religion is more than to say that its Founder is a historic figure : it is to affirm the historic succession of life in his Church.

This succession comes not merely chain-wise from heart to heart. Just as we inherit life from our parents and also inherit the treasure of life achieved not only by our parents but by our whole world of physical, mental, and spiritual ancestors, so besides the life of the Church that comes to us by individual contact, we have its cumulative heritage of spiritual achievement. The Church has in every age laboured in mind, body,

and heart to meet the needs of the day in the spirit of Jesus. The New Testament is the earliest and most valuable of its achievements, which, together with all that has since been thought, spoken, done, and suffered in the spirit of Jesus, serves to quicken and add content and colour to our faith, and gives incentive and suggestion for the applying of his spirit to the needs of our day.

Another creation of the life in whose succession we stand is the present fellowship of those who acknowledge God in Jesus—the Church of to-day. That which binds me to him binds me in a special way to all who are bound to him. I need the fellowship of common worship as much as I need the worship of solitude : each without the other is imperfect. The bodily presence of others is a gain in the discipline and ennoblement of the gregarious and self-regarding instincts, and affords occasion for an experience of the Spirit of God of a sort not otherwise obtainable. “ Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them ” (Matt. xviii, 20) tells of the bodily presence of our fellow-Christians as a condition of the spiritual presence of Jesus. This is so because the outgoing love of God which comes to me through Jesus needs for its wholesome activity in me not only works of love toward others (whether my fellow-Christians or not), but it needs also conditions of worship in which my oneness with others is expressed, in which I worship the Father of all in community with my brethren and have fellowship with them in the reception and acknowledgment of his love in Jesus. The fellowship of the Church is thus above all a fellowship in reception and worship, culminating characteristically

in the Lord's Supper, which proclaims the death of Jesus as the most potent and penetrating expression and act of God's love.

The fellowship of the Church is also the unity that is strength, the co-operation that is effectiveness, to get the good will of God done in the world, for the love of God that acts through us is by no means confined to our fellow-worshippers, but goes out after our brothers who have not yet acknowledged God in Jesus. The corporate endeavour of the Church in the evangelization of the world is the only reasonable expression of the duty that comes with all life lit and empowered by the truth of Jesus, the duty of making his truth available for all. The body of which Christ is the head is committed to his pursuit.

And as the purpose of God, in order that it might do that which it did in Jesus, needed the concrete conditions of life in all its range from the physical to the spiritual, from the intimacies of the home to the movement of empires, so the fulfilment of that purpose through him encompasses the whole concrete sphere of life. We are bound in him to seek the whole good of all. But it must always be borne in mind that the Church is committed by its very life to the conviction that life's problems can be solved only by life lived in the truth of God in Jesus. The propagation of this life must be its main work, and it misses its true way when it attempts by less thorough means to effect the solution of any problem of the day.

It hardly needs to be pointed out that the divisions of Christendom are due to faulty and inadequate ways of understanding the truth of Jesus. If Christianity is

a supernaturally introduced institution bringing the overtures of heaven to the foreign territories of earth, then the Church can and must be defined by means of rite and creed and polity : its duty would be to defend an entrusted deposit. But if the Church is made by the Spirit of Jesus, and if Jesus is the truth of life, then the duty of the Church is, not to define and defend an institution, but to impart a life. If the truth of God in Jesus is the only truth in which our nature can find its health and inward unity, if man is the child of God, and if the sonship of Jesus puts man into the truth of this relation, then for the Church of the redeemed external checks and limits are not needed. The living truth, if it takes root at all, will bring forth fruit after its kind.

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